

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SWAZI COTTON CULTIVATION

1904-85.

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THESIS TOPIC

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SWAZI COTTON CULTIVATION 1904-85.

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## ABSTRACT

Settler farmers in Swaziland failed in their attempt to confine cotton production to their estates partly because of capital limitations. During the First World War some Swazi had fought hard to legitimise cotton production by them, and this became manifest in the 1920s and 1930s when early Swazi cotton growing entrepreneurs emerged, particularly notable being the role of Swazi pastors of religion. But since the cotton price was low, Swazi advances were limited until the late 1950s when some growers made relatively great strides in cotton cultivation especially in the south eastern area. External brokers provided credit for prosperous growers while neglecting other groups, and their produce remained insignificant. Other cultivators among the progressive farmers already owned cattle which were invested in cotton production.

Swazi exploitation of credit provided by brokers, the Colonial State, and Swazi Administration in the late 1960s, facilitated social differentiation among cotton growers. Prosperous growers began to purchase title deed land by the late 1960s, and more in the mid-1970s. At that juncture cotton production expanded due to its high price which attracted more growers from less suited parts of the territory. With prosperity in cotton, traditional cattle were cross-bred to sell for more money to finance cotton. Rich entrepreneurs added other businesses to cotton growing. Cotton expansion led to the formation of a cooperative in south east Swaziland to facilitate trade. To link the area to the rest of the territory, due to multiplied economic activities there, the infrastructure was improved, and economic progress was promoted. Schools, clinics and shops were provided by the cotton growing community.

## PREFACE

This study traces the development of Swazi cotton cultivation from 1904 to 1985. Having begun as a settler monopoly business, Swazi growers who had been shut out fought successfully for participation in the business and the battle was won in the 1950s, when cotton cultivation expanded remarkably in Swazi Areas.

Cotton cultivation in Swaziland had been promoted mainly by companies which were based in South Africa. As a result, research had to be conducted both in South Africa and Swaziland Archives and libraries. To accomplish this project and to undertake fieldwork in Swaziland financial assistance was received from the International Development Research Centre in Nairobi. I am very grateful to the organisation because due to the heavy reliance of this study upon oral evidence, many visits were made to the area studied for frequent interviews. The Social Science Research Unit of the University of Swaziland also deserve a similar gratitude for their financial assistance towards the completion of the research. Among those who financed the study are the British Council without whose sponsorship I could not have been able to undertake my training in England and to return to Swaziland for intensive research, and to them I am very grateful.

The Swaziland National Archives (referred to in the notes as Sna), under the directorship of Julius S. Dlamini were extremely helpful in allowing me access even to files which were still closed according to laws which govern their perservation and use. The staff of the Royal Commonwealth Society Library in London were also helpful in letting me read their records on Swaziland and on the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation. The Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban and the Union Building in Pretoria, South Africa, were also cooperative though their records did not answer those questions which were central to the themes of the study.

During my field work there were many people who made an invaluable input towards the completion of the study. Unfortunately there is not enough space to thank them individually, but to do so in general terms. Among them are my brothers Captain Bongani and Dumisani both of whom assisted me in so many ways. It was at the typing stage that Maryjayne of the History Office, SOAS, also proved an indispensable force and to her I am grateful for the assistance she afforded me. I would also like to express my thanks to Catherine Lawrence of the Geography Department, SOAS, for the assistance she gave me while I was drawing up maps for the thesis.

Finally, I am extremely grateful to my supervisor Professor Richard Gray whose guidance and interest in the study from its inception served as an eye-opener and stimulus in many respects.

1  
CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGINS OF COTTON CULTIVATION,  
1904-16

Already by the end of the 19th century some businessmen and politicians had begun to consider the incorporation of the empire to the metropolis in order to solve the problems that were threatening to wreck the British economy. It was at the end of the 19th century that the prices of industrial products began to decline and so did the profits, and these were brought about by the keen competition for the limited European market, made worse by some rapid industrialisation in Germany and the United States of America. These problems were even exacerbated by 'the reduction of the free trade world by tariff barriers'.<sup>1</sup> Since these events were a threat to the stability of the British economy, it became imperative to develop the colonies so that some economic cooperation between them and the metropolis could be established. The type of development alluded to here was one whereby the colonies would provide markets for British surplus goods which could not compete effectively in the European markets; it was also thought that colonies could provide the raw materials which British industries needed so desperately to survive the competition.<sup>2</sup> Such economic cooperation, it was hoped, would reduce the amount of dependence each of the colonies exerted upon the British economy while at the same time it jerked up their economy.

Politicians such as Joseph Chamberlain, who was Colonial Secretary from 1895 to 1903, had supported the development of commodities such as cotton in the empire as a solution to the declining supplies from the United States of America. It was also during his term of office that the British Cotton Growing Association was formed in Lancashire in 1902 specifically to promote cotton cultivation in the empire. The B.C.G.A., with some British entrepreneurs and chambers of commerce all cooperated to urge colonial governments and the Colonial Office to make the venture a success.<sup>3</sup> During Chamberlain's term of office, great

strides were made in colonial development but the main handicap was the lack of capital. For instance, between '1875 and 1915 parliament authorised a total expenditure of only about £1,400,000' for colonial development.<sup>4</sup> Initially the B.C.G.A. had earmarked West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and South Africa (Zululand and the Eastern Transvaal) as potential cotton producing regions on the African continent.<sup>5</sup>

It was hoped that by 1900 the infrastructure of this sort could have long been realised in these regions, especially in West Africa due to the region's long history of trade with the outside world, but it was obvious that even so the other regions would still require huge sums of money for the development of the infrastructure before it became usable for trading purposes. The failure of the B.C.G.A. to raise adequate funds to improve the infrastructure to facilitate both trade and communication was adequate explanation for the meagre production of the crop until after the First World War, when production began to rise.<sup>6</sup> It would, however, be dangerous to give the impression that the rise in output was due only to the improvement of the infrastructure compared to the market price of the commodity along with other relevant factors of production. However, infrastructural improvements did occur particularly in regions with a high potential for production: these were among areas settled by European producers and in those areas cotton experiments were carried out. There was, however, no deliberate attempt by the colonial regime to provide roads to African areas, and the history of cotton production in Uganda where the African contribution was the dominant factor to Uganda's leading supply of cotton to the market, is a case in point. Here, transport facilities were only improved in the 1920's. Africans who benefited from the transport facilities provided before the 1920's were those who accidentally found their homes lying along roads leading from European settler farms to the market.<sup>7</sup>

In Swaziland, the history of cotton cultivation began in 1904, when Allister Mitchell Miller, owner of large pieces of

land and the Swaziland Corporation, Ltd., started to experiment with some varieties given to him by the B.C.G.A.<sup>8</sup> Miller was a Scottish settler who had arrived in Swaziland in 1888 from Scotland.<sup>9</sup> The time of his arrival in Swaziland followed the 'discovery' of the goldfields in the Witwatersrand which had injected some great hysteria into those European settlers who had come to southern Africa for investment purposes, not just for settlement. With that purpose in mind, Miller wasted no time since soon after his arrival he made his presence felt in the territory. For instance, he was appointed secretary of the White Committee in Swaziland, 'and one of the five representatives of king Mbandzeni on the committee' in which he served as secretary. He also secured for himself a very important position of private secretary to the king. It stands to reason that Miller was greedy for power, because after this key position, he went on to accumulate more power by weaving his way up to the position of Resident Advisor to the king. To attain this latter achievement Miller was assisted by one of the powerful concessionaires in Swaziland, John Thoburn. Thoburn did this by supplanting Sir Theophilus Shepstone in the position of Resident Advisor to the king in favour of Miller, because Shepstone had cancelled Thoburn's concession. But Miller's appointment as Advisor to the king lasted for only a short while, since soon after the death of the king in October 1889 he was removed on account of corruption and Shepstone was re-instated.<sup>10</sup> The dismissal of Miller had been occasioned by the death of king Mbandzeni in October 1889 who was later succeeded by the most vigilant Queen Regent. It was the Queen Regent who realised the speed by which Miller apportioned out large land concessions to his friends. For instance, his friend Thoburn is said to have obtained 'two remarkable concessions' which provided him '100 year leasehold to all land and mineral areas which had not been granted by the king at the time of grant'.<sup>11</sup>

The behaviour of Miller and Thoburn could be understood clearly when placed in the context of the southern African events of the time. Three years before Miller was appointed into the position of Advisor to the king, goldfields were opened up in

the Transvaal for mining, and profits promised a bright economic future in the region. Those who either did not afford adequate capital to compete with the big magnates or arrived late on the spot were turned to other regions which promised to be a second Witwatersrand. To this end some imperialists expanded as far as Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in search of a second gold mine.<sup>12</sup> These elements also spilled over to Swaziland, and the most avid of these are represented by Miller and Thoburn. Immediate mining was not carried out nor was there any search of evidence to ascertain if mineral wealth was actually available, rather the most urgent thing was the accumulation of as much land as possible in those areas which promised to be the second Transvaal.

In an attempt to safeguard and perhaps to multiply the capital already invested, Miller and Thoburn were quick to dispose of some of their concessions to a small London Syndicate in 1889 for £2000, which was later absorbed in June 1891 by a company in London known as the Umbandine Concessions Syndicate with a share capital of £50,000, in which both imperialists are believed to have received '100 £1 shares each'.<sup>13</sup> But due to the labour shortage in the region, the company could not exploit the mineral and other resources, instead it concentrated on the accumulation of more land. The labour shortage was caused by the attractions the South African cash commanded there. It would, however, be proper to talk of competition for labour power between the local (Swaziland) investors and those in South Africa, whereby the former could not compete effectively to stop the migration. It was therefore capital shortage rather than lack of employable numbers of Swazi men that made the capitalists in Swaziland suffer acutely from labour shortages. Even skilled labour, especially from abroad, could not be attracted to Swaziland away from the booming South Africa. In 1898, after its holdings had expanded the syndicate was merged into a public company, the Swaziland Corporation, Ltd., whose first local manager was Allister Mitchell Miller.<sup>14</sup>

In Swaziland, in 1903 when the colonial state was preparing to mount the land partition programme of alienated land, it also imposed a heavy tax on the Swazi with a view towards releasing labour power to go and serve on capitalist institutions. Each male from the age of 18 years was expected to pay £2 and there were other charges, especially in cases of polygamists where a tax of 35 ~~SHILLINGS~~ for each additional wife was paid.<sup>15</sup> The institutions which absorbed the labour were mining industries and the modern agricultural sector. But, as argued by J.S. Crush, at that juncture mining reeled under some economic depression so that it was risky to invest in it then. The only business which offered better investment opportunities and was least affected by the depression was agricultural farming. The interests of the corporation were then swayed to the latter in which it tried plantation agriculture. This venture was made strong and viable by the South African consumer market whose demand for forestry products, sub-tropical produce and stock products all of which were suited to the territory, was gradually expanding.<sup>16</sup> Also charged with the responsibility to multiply the investments of the corporation, the directors had also assessed the possibility of a cotton industry in Swaziland, and the territory promised a bright future in this direction. Since the corporation did not have adequate capital for such an investment the directors had to look beyond its parameters, this time to the metropolises, and specifically to American planters who had the capital and expertise in cotton production. It was hoped that the question of labour would be obviated by the employment of the local womenfolk and the importation of labourers from Portuguese Tongaland.<sup>17</sup>

Already by 1903, the amount of land owned by the corporation had grown so vast that it was thought to be in the region of 379,700 acres. But not all this amount of land could be profitably put under cotton cultivation because some of it was unsuited to the production of the crop due mainly to the huge rocks and high hills which were found in some parts of the territory. About 20,000 acres of Dupont's Estate and 170,000 acres of Peebles in Manzini were ~~SET ASIDE FOR~~ cotton cultivation,



while the rest was turned into grazing grounds. Yet another area which offered better investment opportunities was livestock such as cattle whose market was still remunerative in Johannesburg, South Africa.<sup>18</sup>

Another capitalist company which got involved with cotton cultivation was the Swaziland Mushroom Land Settlement. This company was formed in 1907 by Lord Lovat as the Land Settlement Association of South Africa, with the objective of purchasing land for the settlement of British farmers in the territory. In 1908 the name of the company changed to become the Mushroom Valley Agricultural Training Association. Finance for the company was provided by Lovat's colleagues and friends all of whom became shareholders with fixed rates of interest, while surplus profits were devoted to the expansion of the investments of the syndicate. With the subscribed capital the Swaziland branch of the company was formed and it undertook to cultivate cotton in the midlands of the territory.<sup>19</sup> A third company to take interest in cotton cultivation was the Henderson Consolidated Company, Ltd., whose manager by 1906 was A.R. Torrens.<sup>20</sup>

This then is the background information which will help follow the events which hinge upon the cultivation of cotton in Swaziland from 1904.<sup>21</sup> At this juncture, the B.C.G.A. did not yet have an agent of its own, at least in South Africa and Swaziland, so it was forced to rely upon merchant organizations to spread cotton cultivation in those areas of the region which were suited for the crop. In Swaziland this responsibility was delegated to the Swaziland Corporation, whose base was London. Miller, as local manager shouldered the responsibility. Miller had begun with the experiments at the Mawelawela plains which are found to the west of the Luyengo Campus of the University of Swaziland. Being a settler himself Miller was bound to identify more with the interests of the European settler population to the total oblivion of those of the indigenous people. This attitude became even more glaring when the cultivation of cotton was begun by some settlers through his encouragement. Other cotton



experiments were carried out by Frank Buckham at Croydon near the Mbuluzi River (see sketch map) in the Mliba area in 1904-05.<sup>22</sup> Cotton seeds were distributed to other interested European farmers as early as 1905, a year after Miller himself had started with cotton cultivation for experimental purposes. No African was approached and encouraged to use the seeds for experimental purposes.

The sources available do not unfortunately suggest the reason why the local population was left outside of the cotton venture. Perhaps, the B.C.G.A. did not mention Swazi involvement at so early a stage of cotton production because it did not occur to them that leaving the Swazi out of the list of intended recipients for the seeds would create problems in the long run. It is however, also possible that the B.C.G.A. had made the omission deliberately on the grounds that the Swazi growers, whose agricultural farming methods were still backward, could be involved in due course. Because of the backward farming technology it was perhaps hoped that the Swazi could acquire the technology through their apprenticeship on the farms of their European counterparts and only after that development would they be confident to undertake cotton cultivation. However, this settler attitude was contrary to the philosophy of the B.C.G.A. who aimed to encourage mainly indigenous cultivators to grow the crop along with the settler population. In their long term plan the B.C.G.A. wanted the indigenous growers to play a predominant role particularly in Uganda and Nigeria.<sup>23</sup> Yet what seems to have been another cause for the exclusion of the local growers was the B.C.G.A.'s reliance upon the settlers and the colonial state to introduce cotton production in the territory. Consequently, when the colonial state, along with the collusion of the settlers, began to distribute cotton seeds for cultivation, their approach was predominantly determined by their fear of what would happen to the labour market if both populations were encouraged to grow the crop, and the main worry, it seems, was that the labour market would shrink, in due course. Both the colonial state and the settlers

were wary of the destabilisation of the labour market and as a result sought to protect it at all costs.

Miller's first experiment at the Mawelawela plain did not do well in the 1904-05 season due in the main to the fact that the crop was destroyed by fire. What was left after the destruction, Miller was able to send to the Imperial Institute in London for evaluation in an attempt to assess the potential of the industry in the region. After his laboratory assessment of the quality of the crop, Professor Wyndham Dunstan indicated that the potential was quite high and that in a good season much better results would be realised. This report, however, stated that the crop had been planted rather late hence its delayed ripening. Late planting, which had led to late maturity, had rendered the quality of the crop rather inferior to a crop that could have been planted early to mature at the right time. In essence the report implied that it was important to identify an earlier planting time to improve the quality of the crop.<sup>24</sup> The institute later sent the crop to the ginners for the evaluation of the commercial value of the lint. The latter ginned the crop on the Platt's MaCarthy gin, and after their assessment a report was released and gave more encouraging results than those of the Scientific and Technical department of the Imperial Institute. The following is an extract from the conclusions of the ginners:

In view of the statement already referred to  
which was made in the letter accompanying  
the samples, that the latter represented the  
worst class of cotton in the plantation, the  
results obtained are very encouraging and  
indicate that the best portions of the crop were  
probably of excellent quality. There, can,  
therefore be little doubt that the cultivation  
of these cottons would be very successful  
and further efforts are to be strongly advocated.<sup>25</sup>

The types of cotton referred to in the report above were Sample 1, Brazillian Cotton , Sample 2, Sea Island Cotton, Sample 3, Egyptian Number 1, and Sample 4, Egyptian Number 2, all of

which were planted in the 1904-05 season at the Mawelawela plantation.<sup>26</sup>

The Miller plantation of these varieties was made possible by the technical assistance which was provided by J. Burt-Davy, government botanist from South Africa, stationed at Barberton. It was also through the same scientist that the results from the Imperial Institute were delivered to Miller. But the problem of relying on a scientist who was as distant as Burt-Davy proved a delaying factor in the long run, and the problems which frustrated cotton cultivation and expansion in the territory took rather too long to be solved. Those European settlers who depended upon Miller to solve their technical problems suffered inconvenience especially because of travelling difficulties between their farms and Miller's where they were instructed either by Miller himself or by the scientist who only visited the territory occasionally. Apart from the transport problems, there were yet others which hindered cotton cultivation such as cattle-keeping which pre-dated the growing of cotton. Cattle-keeping was strong for the settlers and more because of the long history behind it. Due to its viable and well established market in Johannesburg and Durban, cattle-keeping appealed to European farmers and to the Swazi cultivators, and perhaps even more strongly to the latter.

Acting on the recommendations of the ginners, Miller transferred cotton planting from the Mawelawela to more suitable areas like his farm, Peebles, in Manzini. Later, Miller expanded to his other farm in Siteki where the climatic conditions were well suited to the production of cotton. The climatic conditions at Mawelawela were more temperate compared to those of Manzini and Siteki which were warm and ideal for the production of cotton.<sup>27</sup> Cotton produced in Swaziland was exported to England through the port of Durban, and the cost of this transport was borne by the producer. In its initial stages, the cotton production technology and all related factors of production, had not yet been mastered by the company to boast of a good quality crop to fetch an attractive

price in London. In order to bring down the costs of transport the company had to invite as many producers as possible so that the transportation costs could be shared equitably between the various growers.<sup>28</sup>

The earliest positive respondent was none other than the Henderson Consolidated Corporation, who duly began to toy with the idea of cotton production in the Balekane area in the year 1906-07, two years after Miller had been on the business. The choice of the area by the Henderson group had been governed by the fact that cotton had been found to be growing wild there and that its quality was considered good and impressive. This realisation served as a guiding factor and the Henderson group were duly attracted by it to begin investing in cotton there. However, due to the shortage of labour power which they encountered the extent of cotton cultivation was handicapped and more so in the following season. Initially, the Henderson Corporation had started off with an area of 5 acres with a view to expand in future, but since the events did not favour these plans the results were different. Not only was the company unable to expand in future but it was forced in the following season to cut down on the amount of land it had cultivated previously by one acre. However, the output was not too bad when one considers that the corporation was still only experimenting with the crop for the first time. In their first year the Henderson realised an 539 lbs seed cotton output per acre with good quality results since the staple was estimated to be one and one-eighth to one and one-quarter, and that was considered close to the world-wide accepted American Upland, which was the best selling staple at that time, used then as a yardstick to measure the quality. The transport expenses were estimated at 6 pence per 100 lb of seed cotton from Swaziland via Komatiport to Durban from where it was shipped to London.<sup>29</sup> In spite of the long waiting before the money could be paid from London, the producers persisted with the cultivation of cotton. Production costs on the other hand were placed at two and three-quarter pence per lb while the market

price in England varied according to the variety as indicated in the analysis table below:

<u>Variety</u>	<u>Price (1906-07)</u>	<u>Price (1907-08)</u>
Bohemian	16 3/4 d per lb	15 1/2 d per lb
Fruitt's Big Boll	" " " "	16 " " "
Russell's Big Boll	16 1/4 " " "	" " " "
Cook's Long Staple	16 3/4 " " "	15 1/2 " " "
Cook's Long Staple <sup>2</sup>	16 " " " "	15 1/4 " " "

This price range indicates that the market price of cotton was encouraging, but the most unfortunate development in Swaziland was the outbreak of pests which spoiled the crop. It was in the same year, 1906-07, that the bollworm, the bug and the cotton stainer, made their appearance felt on the crop and caused considerable concern to the producers.<sup>30</sup> The implication of this development was that the production costs were forced to rise, while it was reported that the local market price did not necessarily respond in the same way. The impact of this development became manifest in 1907-08 as shown in the price decline. As a result of the infestation, the quality declined and consequently the price in England was directly affected while one's knowledge of the local price remains unknown due to the absence of relevant statistics. Only the Fruitt's big boll and the Russell's big boll put up some resilience to the pest attack hence their price was only depressed very slightly.<sup>31</sup> Since the spread of pests that were harmful to cotton was a result of some poor farming technology, all it meant was that the cultivators had employed primitive technology to produce cotton. However, primitive technology went hand in hand with the carelessness of the growers which was reflected in their failure to destroy the cotton trees immediately after harvesting. But pests alone could not have lowered the quality of the crop so drastically without the long distance involved in the transportation of the crop having made a major contribution *en route* to London. This line of reasoning could also be strengthened by the fact that the mode of packing was very backward then compared to the modern one. Seen differently, the problem of insect attack on

the crop need not be viewed in isolation, rather it needs to be used along with other factors whose influence went a long way towards handicapping the effort to establish cotton production in Swaziland. These will be returned to below.

In spite of the adverse experience growers met in cotton production, the Henderson Corporation, whose problems appear to have been more harrowing relative to those of other growers, was not deterred. Instead it went ahead to experiment with other varieties in the next season, 1908-09, and also grew these on different soils from the previous varieties, at a different altitude and the area on which the experiments were carried out received more rainfall than those areas where the company had carried out the work before. In addition to this work the company also wanted to identify the variety whose yield capacity surpassed the others so that in future it invested in the promotion of that particular strain. These were the results: Bohemian was 447 lbs per acre, Abassi was 94 lbs per acre, Fruitt's big boll was 517 lbs per acre, Cook's long staple was 579 lbs per acre, Russell's big boll was 435 lbs per acre,<sup>32</sup> and the yields were encouraging to the company if this were to be improved on in future. These results gave the impression to the company that cotton cultivation would be a paying venture in the long run. However, what was clear to the company was that insect attack would remain their concern so long as their interest in cotton in the area continued. At this time the boll worm, cotton stainer, leaf aphid and triangular leaf disease, had become a constant concern of every investor in cotton. The 1908-09 season had given the Henderson Corporation a harrowing experience, because cotton pests had multiplied very rapidly throughout the country. Ironically, the crop did not sustain a heavy attack as it had done in the previous season most probably because the variety which had been planted in that season was still resistant to pest attack.

The third company to invest in cotton production in the area was the Mushroom Land Settlement, which began the cultivation of cotton in the midlands of the territory in 1907.<sup>33</sup> This



company did not receive adequate coverage in the sources that were consulted perhaps because its contribution was not remarkable since it cultivated cotton in a region that was less suitable for the crop like the Swaziland Corporation had done in the initial stages of the industry. But the midlands, which stood in the middle of the territory, had parts which possessed a suitable climate to the cultivation of the crop. What seems a plausible explanation for the choice of a less suitable region to cultivate cotton by the latter companies is that they had already invested their time and energy in pastoral farming whose profits at the time exceeded those which accrued from cotton production by a wide margin. Both companies were engaged in land sales whose profits, along with those of cattle-keeping, rendered investment in cotton production a secondary undertaking: the market for cotton was remote and its returns took a long time to reach them.<sup>34</sup>

Yet another problem at that moment was the question of labour. Labour shortages threatened to nip the project in the bud. In 1903, for example, the tax payable to government by adult males had been revised and raised with the intention of releasing the labour power to these concerns and others whose business undertakings had been halted by the labour shortages. In order to attract the labour in adequate numbers the companies investing in agricultural farming needed to offer competitive wages not with companies based in South Africa but even with alternative local sources of income likely to divert the labour away from settler farms. The alternative local sources of income assumed the sale of cattle. Sometimes, a range of crops other than cotton which found a viable market locally, were produced and these were sweet potatoes and others though it is important to state that the extent of the market for these crops was very limited at the time. Some of the Swazi growers were resident on private farms, an incident of history because when land alienation took place some of the Swazi already resident in those areas which had been designated for alienation chose to remain there while the conditions were still amicable. The fact that the colonial state allowed some of the Swazi to remain on

private farms, was to prove a serious mistake in the long run since the more Swazi were resident on private farms the more labour power supply was enjoyed by those landlords who practised the system at the expense of those who did not have any tenants on their farms. Most landlords did not allow their tenants to go and sell their labour power to other settlers, and to ensure strict control over this labour Swazi residents on private farms required some written permission to leave the farm not necessarily for purposes of going out to look for a job but generally to leave the farm for any business they needed to do outside. However, the latter system of labour control was more common in South Africa than in Swaziland.<sup>35</sup>

The question of labour is quite intricate, at least in the period under review. For instance, the institution of a written permit for a tenant was primarily meant to provide security to those unscrupulous European settlers who treated their workers harshly, because if there was a free movement of workers from one settler to the next, the unscrupulous ones would face a labour crisis. It was commonplace for tenants, whenever they met, to share accounts of their individual experiences and social relations with their landlords, and subsequently decisions were made to transfer their tenancy from an unscrupulous landlord to a reasonable one.<sup>36</sup> The colonial regime had been sympathetic to the plight of their kith and kin hence the introduction of the written permit which restricted the labour to their employment on a permanent basis. This labour dimension was common in colonial Swaziland, particularly in the period under review.<sup>37</sup>

In the case of companies who grew cotton the tenant system of labour was popular for the same reasons that have already been discussed above. The Swaziland Corporation kept large numbers of tenants on its farm Peebles and these tenants were employed in the production of cotton. In most cases, however, the dominant mode of production was the capitalist one. This latter mode of production appears to have been more exploitative especially because it concentrated on the employment of women and children who were paid low wages

in the region of 6d per day for picking up to 25 and sometimes upwards of 30 lbs seed cotton by 1907.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, tenants were encouraged to cultivate cotton on private land, and this cotton was in turn purchased by the landlords on whose farms the production had taken place at 2s to 4s per bag weighing the equivalent of 50 kgs in today's metric measurements.<sup>39</sup> This phenomenon begins to feature in the history of cotton cultivation by Swazi growers in 1910 and becomes a common phenomenon later but under some strict control. While the Swazi producer was saved from the transportation problems which involved taking the crop to the market, the fact that his produce was listed under the names of people who had not actually done the production distorted the history of cotton cultivation especially by not giving due credit to the actual producers of the commodity.

In the Balekane area the Henderson Corporation was joined a year later by some settlers in the production of cotton. S. Sandeman, for instance, began to grow cotton in 1907.<sup>40</sup> Since he kept some tenants on his farm he did not experience the labour shortage problem which had been encountered by the above company. In addition to tenants, Sandeman also employed the services of women and children. Sandeman is believed to have been one of the settlers who favoured the retention of tenants as a form of labour power by increasing the land upon which they settled and carried out their private agricultural farming at attractively low rates of rental. The objective of land increment was mainly to attract, for settlers of Sandeman's calibre, more tenants with a view to sustain the labour issue. In Mafutseni, which lies west of the Manzini town, settlers such as Herbert S. Perry and Captain Wallace of Dinedor, are also alleged to have engaged in cotton cultivation by means of engaging tenants on their farms. In the majority of cases tenants depended on their families for labour to produce cotton, and only on very rare cases would they employ outside labour, especially when one considers the meagre level on which cotton was being grown at the time. Yet again it is difficult to assess this aspect and the level of cotton growing in the absence of

statistical backing in the recorded sources, but oral evidence asserts that the estimates were between one acre to one and a half acres. To a short sighted group of Swazi producers such an arrangement represented some bargain since it saved them from the problems of transport and others.<sup>41</sup>

Those settlers who resisted the use of tenants for cotton production did so either because they wanted to continue with the struggle to make cotton purely a European crop or due to the fact that they could not attract enough tenants to their farms. The latter category of disgruntled white farmers later advocated the elimination of tenancy on the grounds that it encouraged the spread of pests which would lead to the destruction of the industry in the territory in due course. However, these allegations were not accepted by every settler and those who benefited from the tenant system dismissed the explanation as being a lame excuse for racism. Yet another plausible explanation is that some settlers feared competition more than the destruction of the cotton industry in the long run. Hence, in order to pre-empt such a development, in 1909, some European settlers began to move very strongly for the formation of what came to be known as a European Farmers' Association which was duly formed in 1911.<sup>42</sup> It was thought that the farmers' Association would attend to the farming problems of the settler community by providing marketing facilities, and other things which helped to solve some of the farming problems of the settler community. And two years after the Association was formed those members who held grudges against settlers who practised tenancy solicited the support of the Association to eliminate the practice. First, they argued that the system made the labour market lop-sided to the disadvantage of those who did not favour it. Second, tenants who sometimes failed to get an adequate harvest to impress their landlords that they were indispensable, would steal from their neighbouring settler farmers to swell their small output. Thirdly, disgruntled farmers also expressed their concern on the delicate nature of cotton cultivation and that if some of those who grew it, like the Swazi,

did not know how to counteract the spread of pests, the industry would be nipped in the bud by such careless considerations.<sup>43</sup>

In the same year similar developments occurred in the Union of South Africa, and led to the enactment of the 1913 Land Act, whose gist was mainly to reduce economic cooperation between Europeans and Africans for fear that some of the Africans might, in the long run, emerge as rich entrepreneurs. In the same wise, European settlers in Swaziland might have feared that their 'superior culture' was in danger of being challenged by 'the noble savage', which meant that the beliefs and notions they had held and sometimes promulgated about the African, as being unenterprising and lazy were on the verge of being proven false. The impact of the Act was also adverse upon African growers in South Africa as Colin Bundy has indicated in his study of 'peasants' there.<sup>44</sup> In fact, Swazi responses to the cultivation of cotton were no longer confined to private farms, but they were gradually spilling over to, and were becoming manifest even on, Swazi Nation Land, then known as reserves.<sup>45</sup> European settler farmers were quick to notice such a development since it threatened to cut short African constant sale of cotton to them (settlers).

Not all of the Swazi growers could, however, be said to have been careless by selling dirty cotton to the market and even to their European counterparts. The fact that the Swazi cotton growers could be divided into two groups: namely those who were careful growers and sold mostly clean cotton and those whose cotton was discovered to be dirty was well known to the noisy European growers and it was precisely this knowledge that made them anxious about Swazi cotton production. This was caused by their concern over the state of the labour market. This development led to the realisation that European monopoly over cotton cultivation was already on the brink of collapse, hence the appeal to the Association for protection against Swazi competition. The solution to most settlers, it seemed, was to discourage the Swazi from growing the crop by accusing them of stealing cotton from the farms of

their (European) neighbours, a strategy which led to Swazi growers being paid very low sums for their cotton. Statistics are, however, wanting especially on the exact prices which were paid to the Swazi for their cotton; oral research does nonetheless allege that an equivalent of a 50 kg was purchased by Europeans at 4s or even less sometimes on the grounds that the crop was of inferior quality or sometimes that it had been stolen.<sup>46</sup> But since all European cotton was baled by Swazi workers, the allegations made that Swazi cotton was of inferior quality was discovered to be false since it was baled along with European cotton without any prior clean up exercise being carried out on Swazi cotton. However, not all settlers were anti-Swazi grown cotton, for instance, European farmers like Perry of Mafutseni, and Captain Wallace, found south west of Luve, treated Swazi growers well and reasonably good prices were paid for their cotton.<sup>47</sup> But it is important to note that at that time the Swazi did not cultivate cotton on a large-scale, the acreage, as indicated above, ranged between one-half acre to one and half acres per producer. The majority of these Swazi growers were small-scale cultivators which means that their contribution was very minimal. In that case they could not have materially threatened the hegemony of the settler farmers at least in the short run.<sup>48</sup>

The problems of transport were minimal and could not have served as a strong deterrent to Swazi production of the crop because the majority of the Swazi who grew cotton were those whose homesteads lay close to the settler farmers' holdings who encouraged them to sell the crop directly to them. Secondly, the amount produced up to the outbreak of, and even for the duration of the First World War, was too small to warrant hiring a truck for its transportation. The form of transport widely used was portage whereby only members of the family carried the burden, sometimes with the assistance of other members of the extended family. But generally, family labour, for the transportation of the item, was sufficient and other forms of transport only became a necessity in the 1950's when the volume in output began to expand.<sup>49</sup> The issue of Swazi cotton

production began to worry settler producers in 1914 and in subsequent years. The year 1914 is crucial in the sense that it is when Swazi residents, on private farms, were forcibly moved to Swazi reserves. When this occurred, among those who migrated from private farms, were tenant farmers who had grown cotton on the farms of their landlords, on a 'share-crop system'. After these growers had moved to Swazi areas they did not give up the habit. As a result they became a force to reckon with especially by those settlers who were bent on throttling such an entrepreneurship. Among these growers were those who had since accumulated the technical skills, and equipment such as the plough, basic as it was, when they began to grow cotton on Swazi Nation Land, their farming attracted the attention of both factions of the European community: those who wanted to frustrate the endeavour and those who aimed to encourage the enterprise so that they could continue to benefit from buying the commodity at low prices, by taking advantage of the lack of transport on the part of the Swazi producer. The majority of these Swazi entrepreneurs did not have a high degree of awareness in commerce, and perhaps that explains why they did not resist their exploitation by these settlers. But there is more to it than meets the eye, for the payment of the tax was one notorious cause for Swazi exploitation since 1903 when the tax was revised and the tax made heavy for all Swazi males who were of paying age. Those who wished to remain with their families and did not migrate to South Africa in order to avoid a social dislocation similar to that which was experienced in South Africa, the cause of which was the mineral revolution,<sup>50</sup> chose to earn the required money by other more noble means, chief among which was the sale of cattle and the production of cotton, still in its embryonic stage. In the process these Swazi growers lent themselves to settler exploitation.

In conclusion, what has transpired in the discussion is that, when cotton production was begun not only in Swaziland but throughout the empire, the B.C.G.A.'s main objective was to stabilise the constant flow of the commodity to the metropolis by encouraging both settlers and the indigenous group of

growers to cultivate the crop. It was, however, the latter group that the B.C.G.A. sought to concentrate on for the production of cotton, due in the main to the cheap mode of production they utilised. But in Swaziland as a result of the indigenous people's rural economy being peripheral to the market economy, the only group who appeared ready for the project at least in the mean time were the settlers. The latter aimed to retain the enterprise as a purely European preserve, but the contradictions which soon punctuated their capitalist mode of production gave way to Swazi participation by 1909. Settlers themselves realised that to secure the labour services of the male members of the Swazi community they needed to encourage them instead to grow the crop and later sell it to the settlers.

### NOTES

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2. S. Constantine, The Making of British Colonial Policy 1914-40 (London: Frank Cass, 1984), pp. 10-11; C. Youe, 1978, op. cit. pp. 178-181.
3. S. Constantine, 1984, op cit, p. 11; C. Youe, 1978, op. cit. pp. 180-81.
4. S. Constantine, 1984, op cit, p. 12.
5. G. B. Masfield, 1950, op. cit. pp. 86-88.
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7. C. Youe, 1978, op cit, pp. 165,170; V. Harlow *et al* (eds) History of East Africa vol. 2. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965) pp. 404, 420-21.
8. Sna Rcs 285/09 Allister Mitchell Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 11 May, 1906; The Times of Swaziland, January, 29, 1904; A.M. Miller, The Swaziland Corporation Ltd., (London, 1904) p. 25.



9. Sna Rcs 285/09 Allister M. Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 11 May, 1906; J.S. Crush, "Settler-Estate Production, Monopoly Control, and the Imperial Response: The Case of the Swaziland Corporation, Ltd., African Economic History, 8, (1979), p. 185.
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11. J.S. Crush, 1987, op. cit. p. 185.
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13. J.S. Crush, 1979, op. cit., p. 185.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.; ———, The Struggle For Swazi Labour, 1890-1920 (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1987) p. 72.
16. J.S. Crush, 1979, op. cit. p. 187.
17. Ibid; The Times of Swaziland, January, 29, 1904; Sna Rcs 285/09 Henderson Corporation Consolidated Ltd. to Government Secretary on Cotton Experiments in Balekane, 9 May, 1906.
18. Sna Rcs 285/09 Henderson Corporation report on Cotton Experiments in Balekane, 9 May, 1906; Rcs 213/11 Henderson Corporation report on Cotton Growing in Balekane, 10 March, 1910.
19. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 30 June, 1909.
20. Sna Rcs 285/09 Henderson Corporation report on Cotton Growing in Balekane, 7 March, 1908;
21. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Cotton Experiments in Bremersdorp, 7 July, 1906; Rcs 213/11 Miller report on Cotton Experiments in Bremersdorp, 25 August, 1906.
22. Sna Rcs 213/11 Miller report on Cotton Experiments in Bremersdorp, August, 9, 1908; The Times of Swaziland, 1904.
23. C. Youe, 1978, op cit, p. 178.
24. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 15 August, 1906.
25. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 7 July, 1906; Rcs 312/11 Henderson report on Cotton Experiments in Balekane, August, 25, 1906.

26. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 25 August, 1906.
27. Sna Rcs 383/17 G.L. Wallace of Dinedor to Miller on Cotton Cultivation in the Mbuluzi Valley, 9 February, 1910.
28. Sna Rcs 383/17 G.L. Wallace to Miller on Cotton Marketing in Swaziland, 17 February, 1910.
29. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Problems of Cotton Marketing in Swaziland, 17 September, 1909.
30. Sna Rcs 285/09 Miller report on Problems of Cotton Marketing, 21 July, 1909; Kcl Ms 25/26 Miller Papers on Cotton Marketing in Durban, 15 September, 1910.
31. Sna Rcs 213/11 G.L. Wallace to Miller on Cotton Experiments in the Mbuluzi Valley, 17 July, 1909.
32. Sna Rcs 213/11 Henderson report on Cotton Experiments in Balekane, 17 February, 1909.
33. Sna Rcs 213/11 Miller report on Cotton Experiments in Swaziland, 17 September, 1909.
34. Sna Rcs 285/09 Government Secretary report on the Mushroom Land Settlement and Cotton Growing, 21 March, 1908.
35. Kcl Ms 126 Miller papers on Cotton Experiments in Bremersdorp, 6 December, 1920; interview Lofana and Alice Mabuza, Nietgegund, 17 July, 1983.
36. Interview S.B. Williams, Manzini, 30 July, 1980; J.D. Scot, Luve, 10 August, 1980 and 11 March, 1982; Mafa Dlodlu, Mtsambama, 9 June, 1982.
37. Sna Rcs 275/14 Swaziland European Farmers' Association to Resident Commissioner on objections to Swazi purchase of land, 7 June, 1914.
38. Sna Rcs 483/08 Government Secretary to Resident Commissioner on Labour employment and levels of wages, 4 September, 1908.
39. Sna Rcs 285/09 Government Secretary to the Henderson Corporation on the state of labour and levels of wages, 29 August, 1909.
40. Sna Rcs 285/09 Henderson Corporation report on the progress in Cotton Growing in the lowveld, 20 June, 1909; interview J.D. Scot, Luve, 10 August, 1980.

41. Sna Rcs 285/09 G.L. Wallace to Government Secretary on Cotton Cultivation in Mafutseni and Luve, 27 July, 1909; interview G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 10 August, 1980.
42. Sna Rcs 423/17 Swaziland European Farmers' Association to Resident Commissioner on Native Cotton Growing, 20 August, 1912.
43. Sna Rcs 213/11 Swaziland European Farmers' Association on Cotton Growing by Natives, 25 March, 1911.
44. Sna Rcs 213/11 Swaziland European Farmers' Association on Cotton Growing by Natives, 8 March, 1911; also see Colin Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry, (London: Heinemann, 1979) p. 190 in Natal, and 214-215 in the Transvaal; interview Amos Mathe, Madlangampisi, January, 17, 1983.
45. Sna Rcs 423/17 Swaziland European Farmers' Association to the Resident Commissioner on Swazi Cotton Growing, 25 December, 1914.
46. Interview S.B. Williams, Manzini, 11 August, 1980; G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 10 August, 1980; Lucy Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 5 December, 1982.
47. Interview J.D. Scot, Luve, August, 30, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 5 December, 1982.
48. Interview Lucy Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 5 December, 1982; Mhlupheki Masuku, Luve, 13 February, 1983; Sna Rcs 298/20 Swaziland European Farmers' Association to Resident Commissioner reference made to Cotton Growing by Natives, 9 July, 1913.
49. This discussion comes up in chapter 4 below.
50. Interview Lucy Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 5 December, 1982; Mhlupheki Masuku, Luve, 13 February, 1983; Maganga Mlotsa, Maloma, 17 November, 1982; Lobamba Masuku, Lulakeni, 27 December, 1982; Luke Shongwe, Lulakeni, 3 March, 1983; and see M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds) The Oxford History of South Africa, vol. 2. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 126-136.

## CHAPTER TWO

THE FRUSTRATION OF SWAZI COTTON CULTIVATION,  
1916-31.

Those Swazi who had worked on company plantations and European settler farms had, by 1916, accumulated adequate knowledge on the production technology required to grow cotton.<sup>1</sup> Following the revision of the tax by the colonial state, some Swazi men who were of a tax paying age earned money by producing cotton, tobacco and maize, though the local market for the latter was poorer than that of the two cash crops.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this group of Swazi growers were pastors, and some migrant workers who had been to the Natal Province of South Africa. Some of the pastors who responded to cotton production received some assistance from the Catholic Church though they were not members of the church, such as Ephraim M. Dlamini of Ngudzeni or Paul Thwala of Sandleni, but due to their desire to imitate their catholic friends and relatives, they sought their advice and even technical assistance.<sup>3</sup> Archival sources mention that early Swazi respondents to cotton cultivation were educated. In fact, pastors of that time did not have a high education, merely one that enabled them to read their bibles, write and count Sunday offerings.<sup>4</sup> Yet other Swazi cotton producers were migrant workers who had visited the Natal Province in search of employment. It was at Magudu, the northern part of Zululand, that the BCGA experimented with cotton. Cotton in the area had been grown by C.J. Rhodes and his brother in the late 1860s.<sup>5</sup> The response from European settlers was promising in the area, and they are the ones who employed Swazi migrants there. The experience accumulated there in cotton production became useful when the need to grow it in Swaziland was created by the Swaziland Proclamation number 1 of 1916 which raised the level of tax to a maximum of £4 10s per year, especially for polygamists.<sup>6</sup>

The challenge presented by these growers to companies and settlers was not easy to frustrate. In the past settlers had used Swazi tenants to grow cotton on their behalf, but after the

war began, with the price of cotton improved, these tenants moved to Swazi areas where they grew cotton for a livelihood. Initially, settlers had colluded with the colonial state to frustrate Swazi cotton production, by withholding the seeds from Swazi growers, but this strategy failed later. The main explanation for its failure was that some of the settler farmers depended on Swazi production, and the latter had accepted very low prices for their cotton, and this led to both groups being eager to retain this cooperation. The terms of the cooperation included the distribution of cotton seeds to the growers and the improvement of the price for the crop from 1916. However, this arrangement affected those who retained the erstwhile arrangement while the new ones were given less lucrative terms. It had dawned to some European farmers that productive Swazi growers who were dedicated to cotton cultivation came from those who worked on their own fields and not employees on European farms. The incentive to produce was made stronger by the returns realised. Those who were employed on the farms had shown lack of dedication. Their efforts were concentrated on maximising ~~THEIR~~ hours of service to ~~INCREASE~~ the amount of hours worked. The result was that the services rendered were more quantitative than qualitative. This led to the poor quality of the crop relative to that which was produced on Swazi areas independently of settler direct control. In fact, the result was that all three groups, when given adequate technical advice, produced cotton of a reasonably high quality.<sup>7</sup>

This Swazi effort was reinforced in 1917, the same year the Empire Cotton Growing Committee was formed and operated demonstration lessons for both potential Swazi cultivators and those who had already begun to grow the crop.<sup>8</sup> The committee had been formed to investigate the problems which hindered cotton growing in the empire. The committee secured the services of a South African scientist, H.W. Taylor, to investigate the suitability of the territory to a cotton industry. It was during the war that Taylor carried out his research by visiting virtually every part of the territory, and his report sounded some optimism in 1918.<sup>9</sup> The report was transmitted to the Cotton Council, administrative body of the BCGA. The Cotton Council

which engineered the formation of the committee resolved that cotton cultivation be promoted throughout suited parts of the empire to supply England.<sup>10</sup> It is not clear why Taylor's report mentioned Hlathikhulu as being suited to cotton production, especially because of its low temperatures relative to regions such as Bremersdorp. However, a possible explanation is that Taylor might have been biased, first, by the encouraging settler and Swazi responses to cotton production in the area, and secondly, he might have been biased by the committee's choice of the area to set up a demonstration plot to teach the interested Swazi cultivators improved methods of cotton cultivation. In short, rather than carry out a scientific investigation, Taylor allowed himself to be influenced by the place where the crop had been grown to draw up his conclusion.

It would appear that both the committee and Swazi cultivators were motivated by the improvement of the price in 1916. Prior to the outbreak of the war, the lint price at the Liverpool market was 5 pence per lb and in 1916 it rose to 8 pence of Liverpool price.<sup>11</sup> But since it seems the local price was still low the motivation among the Swazi remained low as indicated by the amount of land each grower cultivated. Recorded sources speak in general terms, and oral research corroborated the meagreness of the acreage by soliciting some estimates, especially from growers themselves as well as observers. The majority of those who attempted to grow the crop confined the acreage to one-quarter and one-half of an acre per planting season. The infinitesimal amount of the land under cotton is best explained by the labour intensiveness of the commodity and by the grower's agricultural economy which involved growing many other crops, especially food crops.<sup>12</sup> Yet another plausible explanation is that the demands for cash generated by cotton were not as multiple as in the 1950's. Before, during and immediately after the First World War money was required to meet tax obligations and other necessities such as the purchase of food and clothes. Expenditure on education was very minimal and even then there were few Swazis who sent their children to school for education, most of which was handled by church missions. But perhaps the most important factor was the price.

During the war Swazi cotton growers thought that the crop sold at about 2 or 3 pence per lb and most of the growers did not even realise that the settlers cheated them.<sup>13</sup>

Swazi responses to the improved market price, and to the establishment of a demonstration plot at Hlathikhulu were viewed by the disgruntled European settlers as detrimental to their monopoly over cotton cultivation. The committee, which had successfully wooed the cooperation of the department of agriculture to do demonstration work and distribute cotton seeds free of charge, provoked the anger of racist settlers who lobbied the support of the administration to frustrate its progress.<sup>14</sup> The European settler insecurity was not so much a result of the amount of cotton each Swazi grower produced as the future threat of that contribution to the monopoly settlers enjoyed, which involved the competition the Swazi would present. Production in maize and sorghum suffered the same fate. To those who were opposed to cotton cultivation the influenza epidemic of 1918 was seen as punishment to the nation for allowing the spread of crops which were not central to the rural economy. These were mainly cotton and tobacco. Cotton, in particular, was held suspect due to the fact that unknown pests came to infest the country not long after its introduction. However, Swazi cotton cultivators thought differently from the reactionary faction, and as such they continued with its production. It was precisely this determination, more than anything else, that made the Swazi growers push ahead in spite of the disapproval of chiefs and some settlers. That the influenza epidemic did not necessarily force Swazi growers out of cotton cultivation is supported by the fact that the acreage put under cotton in Swazi areas began to rise again in 1919-20. In the previous season the national amount of land under cotton was 100 acres while in the 1918-19 season the acreage had risen to an estimate of 500. This rise in the acreage and output in cotton was correspondent to the rise in the world market price to 25 pence per lb of lint.<sup>16</sup> However, since the market price referred to here was external, one can only suggest that the rise in acreage and output may have been caused by that of the lint price. It is important to note that statistics of this nature do not say much

about individual grower contribution, particularly the Swazi one since they give a gross national picture. Oral evidence indicated that Swazi growers were affected adversely by the epidemic,<sup>17</sup> and the acreage in Swazi areas went down as in 1917-18, with a correspondingly depressed output which was worsened by drought conditions. On a gross national level, however, the output was not correspondent with the amount of land cultivated with cotton compared to that of the previous year. While in the planting year ending May 1918, 100 acres were cultivated with an output of 1,911 lbs seed cotton, in the year ending in May 1919, 500 acres were cultivated with the output placed at 2,737 lbs seed cotton.<sup>18</sup>

These statistics, however, do not elaborate on what was happening on SNL regarding the extent of land cultivated with cotton nor are the figures of output given. The colonial state did not believe that the Swazi grew cotton worth marketing at this juncture. This attitude is given weight by the Resident Commissioner's reaction to the plea of the European Farmers' Association to stop Swazi cultivation of cotton. D. Honey, then Resident Commissioner (1920), reacted by stating that the Swazi who grew cotton were educated and too few then to have caused that amount of scare.<sup>19</sup> Considering that the number of Swazi growers was small and that they did it on a small scale and on a part-time basis they did not challenge the monopoly European farmers enjoyed. The bias of the colonial state distorted the history of Swazi contribution to agricultural development. Had it not been for the threat European settler farmers felt from the Swazi challenge, the progress which was happening in agricultural farming could have passed unnoticed.

European settler farmers had advanced both factual and unfounded justifications for wanting government to stop Swazi cotton production. The factual justifications were based on the fact that if Swazi cotton growers increased and progress realised, the labour market would deteriorate further and reach crisis proportions. At the end of the First World War, Swaziland settler farmers competed both among themselves and with mining magnates in South Africa for limited Swazi labour. Migration to



South Africa was tending upwards as a result of the revised tax. Men, for instance, paid upwards of £4 10s after the tax revision in 1916.<sup>20</sup> The main attraction in South Africa was not so much the feeling of having been to industrialised South Africa as some writers have suggested, but the higher wages offered there compared to those obtaining in Swaziland. Adult males are alleged to have been paid between 15 and 20 shillings in Swaziland, while in South Africa the wages were as high as 30 shillings or more, plus rations by 1917.<sup>21</sup> But migration also meant disapproval of government's imposition of the tax in order to push labour to the farms of European settlers within the territory. The Swazi who resisted local farm employment migrated to South Africa specifically for short target periods aimed at earning the amount required to settle taxes and meet other financial obligations.<sup>22</sup>

Polygamists paid more tax because for each additional wife a tax of 35 shillings was charged, which is understood by Crush to have been 'a tax of the productive capacity of the homestead'.<sup>23</sup> In fact, it was generally believed that an additional wife would swell the otherwise meagre labour force per homestead thereby boosting its 'productive capacity'. If this development was left uncurbed, the feeling entertained by the colonial state and the European settlers was that such homesteads would eventually become self-reliant something they viewed as detrimental to the settler and company economies which depended on African labour for survival, a point expatiated upon by Crush.<sup>24</sup> It is equally crucial to note that while self-reliance might have been the drive behind polygamy, the people involved thought differently from materialists. While it is factual that polygamists enjoyed more labour than monogamists, the maintenance expenses were also higher. In short, there was some balance between the maintenance of a large family and big labour turnover, the shortage of labour but fewer mouths to feed. Other accompanying results have been additional financial obligations of a various nature which pushed polygamists into a labour market upon which the capitalist mode of production depended for its survival. Mveli Nyatsikati of Mtsambama in Hlathikhulu,

was a victim of polygamy and he depended on wage labour. The main cause of this predicament was the tax and the high cost of living.<sup>25</sup> As he argued, maize prices were very high then, at 30 shillings per bag of 200 lbs while the wages ranged between 15 and 20 shillings per month, and that was the same duration for which a bag of maize lasted particularly for a family of 6 to 10 members.<sup>26</sup>

In 1918 and following years some chiefs began to worry over Swazi cotton production, for they considered that their effort should be directed towards the stabilisation of maize production in the territory. The concern of the chiefs over cotton production was exacerbated by Swazi cotton growers who came from private farms when mass evictions were implemented in 1914.<sup>27</sup> Chiefs felt that the influence of these growers could affect everybody in the area, and food production would continue to decline. Secondly, these newcomers introduced land enclosure to facilitate its development, the long-term purpose being to raise its surplus generating capacity. Land enclosure did not only assume the use of wire but it also involved the piling up of branches of trees to conceal what was grown inside. The purpose was to ward off animals that destroyed the crops. Land enclosure became a necessity when planting seasons started late thereby delaying even the picking season until late in July or early August. By that time cattle would be let loose to forage for food on harvested fields. Even when rains came early in the planting season, such as in August or September, cotton could not be planted until the second week of October as per the regulation. The main reason was that early planting helped pests to multiply much faster than when the crop was planted in the second week of October or later.<sup>28</sup> The traditional practice was that common land was not enclosed since that meant the denial of other members free access to the usufructuary rights to it, and chiefs kept an eye on these acts. Chiefs also ensured that everybody gave first priority to maize production to stabilise its supply. Maize had already become a staple foodcrop. Maize production was widespread to warrant chiefly insistence on its production at the expense of cotton.

In this manner chiefs had colluded with the capitalist system of production which encouraged the Swazi to sell their labour to European settlers rather than to produce cotton for a livelihood. It was at this time that the use of the plough was gradually expanding in Swaziland, especially in Shiselweni and Bremersdorp.<sup>29</sup> Cotton and maize production required some different technology from the hoe which was used to produce traditional crops like sorghum. It became necessary for growers to use different technology to facilitate the breaking up of the soil to more than one and half inches deep to enable the tap roots to anchor into the soil and tap the food and other requisite minerals. To this end the ratio of ploughs to homesteads was thought to be one to ten. After World War One, the number had increased in Hlathikhulu, at least according to oral evidence, to one plough to a homestead. But even there most of the Swazi who owned the plough were those who cultivated maize, cotton and tobacco.<sup>30</sup> What seems to have facilitated the diffusion of these ploughs was the symbiotic commercial relationship which existed between some European farmers and Swazi cotton and tobacco producers. Europeans endeavoured to nurture the relationship when the market conditions operated against them, as in 1920 to 1923 when the production declined due to the slumped price. European farmers thought that Swazi producers did not feel the impact of the depressed price of cotton as they did themselves because the Swazi relied on a pre-capitalist mode of production. Swazi growers who entered into this arrangement were those who wanted to exploit the relationship to acquire what they needed to promote their farming, like that of cotton with the use of the plough.<sup>31</sup>

European settler struggle to frustrate Swazi production of cotton was thus weakened in part by the division inherent in the white farmer community itself. The less able financially often fell back on Swazi growers to sell their cotton to them (settlers) at very low prices. However, the Cotton Committee had noticed the problems of cotton marketing faced not only by Swazi growers but also by other poor white cotton producers and advocated the establishment of a local market. The ginnery was duly set up in Bremersdorp by the Swaziland Power Company in 1923. The

latter area was chosen for its central position in the country and to the cotton producing area, and there were more cotton growers in it by 1923.<sup>32</sup> Bremersdorp took the lead due to its congenial climatic conditions. But the transport problems continued to frustrate Swazi growers who found it cheaper and more convenient to sell to their neighbouring settler farmers because some of them owned transport. Another reason for the choice of Bremersdorp as a market was the concentration of large scale producers such as companies in it. The Swaziland Corporation, the Henderson Corporation; and others all grew cotton in Bremersdorp. There were fewer undertakers in Hlathikhulu. Yet another reason for the gin to be in Bremersdorp was the output per acre which was higher than that of Hlathikhulu. For instance, the output per acre in Bremersdorp was about 500 lbs seed cotton, while in Hlathikhulu the most they could get per acre was 400 lbs or even less. This fact was noted in 1922, a year before the Power Company opened up the market. This observation was a result of the work of the ECGC formed on 12 September, 1921, as a research body of the BCGA.<sup>33</sup> In Swaziland it shouldered the work which had been executed by the Cotton Committee.

The formation of the ECGC was also necessitated by the task of counteracting the spread of pests and of identifying a variety that was more resistant to pest attacks. Pest ravages were a common problem to cotton not only in Swaziland but even in Barberton and Magudu areas. However, the latter two supported a strong cotton industry, especially after a suitable variety had been identified. And this achievement was due to the quick response of the BCGA's Council at forming the ECGC, who provided solutions to the scientific problems that worried the crop. Since there were no advanced research facilities in Swaziland, laboratory research was carried out in Barberton, and the ECGC carried out research in Swaziland and sent whatever species that required laboratory examination to either Pretoria or Barberton.<sup>34</sup> In its enquiry into the problems of cotton production, the ECGC consulted with large scale producers such as companies and settlers. The ECGC personnel attended to the problems of the latter group and not those which hindered Swazi production and the reasons may simply be that they were more

sympathetic to the concern of the settlers about the labour market if the Swazi were allowed to grow cotton; it did the direct opposite of the Cotton Committee whose involvement with Swazi growers went back to 1917. The ECGC simply followed on the footsteps of those South African scientists such as W.H. Scherffius, who solved production problems experienced by large scale cotton producers. It is difficult to evaluate the impact of the ECGC on cotton production in Swaziland since the ECGC was formed at a time when the market price had been depressed, and this had its adverse impact reflected on the production. After the output began to rise in 1923, it was affected adversely yet again in 1924-25 by the lateness of rains.<sup>35</sup> Pest outbreak was successfully brought under control by the ECGC through the cooperation of the then cotton advisor, W.B. Wilson, who boasted of some experience in cotton problems. Wilson had been involved previously with cotton production problems in Ceylon and later Northern Zululand.<sup>36</sup> In Ceylon his attention was mainly focussed upon cotton production by the indigenous people which explains his appointment into such a critical post at a time when a man of some outstanding expertise, not only in scientific problems but also in social problems, was required to resolve the racial issues which dominated cotton farming. Wilson's arrival in Swaziland, as a colonial state's appointee to work with the Cotton Committee, coincided with the struggle of the Swaziland European Farmers' Association to stop Swazi attempts at their nascent stage of cotton development. While it is not all too clear why Wilson was not willing to help the Swazi, his exposure to settler racist attitudes towards Africans in the Natal Province might suggest his reasons for more sympathy with settlers than with the Swazi.

In support of settler effort, Wilson reiterated their (settlers') argument that if Swazi growers cultivated cotton, before they had improved their farming technology, and had been advised against 'negligent farming', pests would spread rapidly and harm the industry. Wilson based his arguments on his experiences not only with the indigenous farmers of Ceylon, but even with Zulus nearby, where he had served as cotton advisor before he took up his appointment in Swaziland.<sup>37</sup> As a result of this argument the appearance of pests in Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun was attributed

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to indigenous cotton cultivators. However, the administration had chosen to remain passive on the issue especially after Wilson joined the struggle on the side of the settlers. Initially, the Resident Commissioner had dismissed the allegation as being unfounded because he had assumed that Swazi cotton growers were those who could read and write. In that case the manual on cotton production distributed to all potential growers served as a deterrent to the spread of insects dangerous to the industry. Consequently, very few Swazi growers cultivated cotton especially in Mtsambama, where the secretary of the settler farmer association, Pierce Pringle, had come from. But *en route* to Goedegun, in Nietgegund and Dwaleni, (see attached sketch map), some Swazi growers persisted with the enterprise amidst the complaints that they encouraged the spread of cotton diseases and that they stole cotton from their European counterparts, especially at night. The pressure on Swazi growers to stop producing cotton even in the latter two areas was no less heavy. However, what made them persist amidst all the allegations was that they did not depend on European farmers for the market any longer. Most of their cotton was sold to some South African buses which deposited it to itinerant merchants in Piet Retief from where it was taken to Cotona at Kempton Park.<sup>38</sup>

Relating his harrowing experience and that of colleagues in cotton cultivation, James Mamba of Dwaleni, said that they did not fail to carry cotton on their heads, and sometimes on the back of donkeys, to the main road where buses collected it. Persistence in cotton production was motivated both by cash and the desire to win the battle with settlers. The struggle was the resistance to sell labour to European and company plantations, where Swazi workers were exposed to hard work under strict conditions for very low wages of 10 to 15 shillings per month.<sup>39</sup> Even though their cotton output was small, at least it gave them some cash with which to meet their tax obligations and made some investments. Their cotton output per season per grower did not exceed one bag, and sold to South African buses who were thought to have paid them approximately £10 or even more.<sup>40</sup> Yet when sold to European settlers, one bag fetched a sum which did not exceed £6 depending on the quality of the crop.<sup>41</sup>

Mamba admitted that the quality fluctuated violently from season to season depending on a number of factors such as rain which sometimes fell at harvest time. Reacting to the allegations that Swazi growers stole from their European counterparts to increase their small harvests, Mamba stated that that conduct did not represent theft. He recalled such cases and that he did not consider the act to be theft because growers were recovering an equivalent of what European settlers had defrauded from them in previous seasons when they bought Swazi cotton. This theft occurred after Swazi growers had realised that an equivalent of a bag was worth far more than £6 which they were paid by settlers.<sup>42</sup> After they had calculated the number of times, and amount of cotton sold to the settlers, they recovered the equivalent in convenient ways and times to avoid confrontation. These observations were corroborated by other oral sources from Ida Mkhonta and Madala Nhleko of Thunzini. At that time, they lived in Nietgegund. There are, however, some conflicts in these oral sources, in that while the reporters refuted the allegations of theft of European cotton, Ida Mkhonta revealed that it had started as the recovery of Swazi cotton acquired through fraud by European farmers but the habit overcame its prosecutors. In this way theft of European cotton became a common phenomenon, but when the European settlers retaliated by shooting at the culprits, it was finally brought under control.<sup>43</sup>

To understand the struggle between European and Swazi cotton growers, especially the fraudulent acquisition of Swazi cotton by settlers, one needs to understand the objectives behind it all. It seems Europeans were bent on discouraging the Swazi from cotton production since that placed the labour market in a very difficult situation, at least on a long term basis. The argument that Swazi cotton growers were illiterate, and that their production would lead to the multiplication of pests was a feeble excuse since pests were common even on settler farms by as early as 1909, as shown in chapter one.<sup>44</sup> At that time no Swazi cultivated cotton, and even in the latter 1910s, there were few Swazi cultivators who grew the crop compared to European settlers. Even the discovery of pests was on European farms since the department of agriculture single-handedly paid special



attention to the settler sector at the expense of Swazi areas. As the stories spread that cotton sold to the South African buses brought more profits, most of the Swazi growers who could transport their cotton to some local bus stops, did so. In the process European settlers were by-passed. The impact of this development on European settlers was twofold: First, the labour market continued to be placed under some threat, second, those settlers who had salvaged the uncertainty of the labour market by purchasing cotton from Swazi cultivators at rock-bottom prices, could no longer enjoy the constant supplies from their erstwhile clients. This development was not peculiar to Hlathikhulu, because even Mafutseni and Lwandle in Bremersdorp began to experience the same development. Some of the producers in the latter areas had sold directly to their settler neighbours in spite of the market in Manzini. Swazi producers avoided selling to the market due to poor transport facilities between their areas and the ginnery. Even those who sold directly to the Power Company, especially from Lwandle, did so due to their nearness to the market. But even these were discouraged by the low prices paid by the company compared to that which obtained in South Africa.

By the 1920s, Swazi growers who sold directly to South Africa through the buses had increased. In Lwandle, for instance, out of eight cultivators, five sold to South Africa.<sup>45</sup> At least the difference in cash per lb of seed cotton was said to be one penny in favour of the South African market. Swazi growers argued, especially David Mkoko of Mafutseni, that the one penny difference was significant when one considered that sometimes a marketable bag weighed 25 lbs or even more. When computing the total difference about 25 pence resulted.<sup>46</sup> In Goedegun the number of Swazi growers who sold to buses was bigger. In Nietgegund alone there were nine growers,<sup>47</sup> and they sold through the buses and obtained their seeds there. But the seeds were over and above what the government distributed to them free of charge through the department of agriculture as part of the package clinched between the cotton committee and the colonial administration in 1917.<sup>48</sup> However, some growers were not given the seeds in an effort to force them to sell labour to

European farmers for wages. Sometimes the agricultural officers, who acted on the orders of influential settlers, exploited the ignorance of some Swazi growers about the free distribution of seeds. In those cases where growers demanded the seeds as per the package, officers gave excuses that seeds had already run out, though when the cultivators insisted they were finally given. Those who insisted on the free distribution were from Nietgegund and Dwaleni,<sup>49</sup> and a few from Mafutseni, as alleged by Scot.<sup>50</sup> It was easy for the settlers, once they secured the support of the department of agriculture, to exploit Swazi growers.

The latter half of the 1920s saw Europeans adopting a different approach towards Swazi challenge of settler monopoly over cotton production. The age of settler brokerage was over, especially after the alternative market at Kempton Park offered better prices. The relationship of broker and Swazi grower, which had been offered by European settlers, had assumed the nature of the brokerage which Roger Southall and John Miles unravelled in their researches on cocoa production and sale in Ghana (Gold Coast).<sup>51</sup> The type of relationship they discovered was equally exploitative, except that the clientelistic relationship of the broker and producer was rather more complicated than the Swaziland one. In Swaziland the broker-Swazi grower relationship involved only two parties and as to what happened to the crop thereafter it was the broker's concern. Even when Clark appeared in Mafutseni towards the close of the 1920's,<sup>52</sup> the relationship remained direct, and even more attractive compared to that offered by the Power Company in Bremersdorp and some settlers. In Goedgegun, Language competed with settler producers in the region.<sup>53</sup> Collusion and competition between these two brokers were made difficult by the problems of communication and transportation. As a result each broker offered a price it considered remunerative to subvert that of its local competitors. If the Swazi had reached an organised level of trade they could have used these factors to their benefit, but their level of production and trade was still very low. Secondly, the crop was labour intensive. Production on a large scale could have caused problems of under-production of those crops which

were supposed to be given first priority. As a tradition, the latter crops were given first preference and chiefs insisted that each homestead afforded at least the minimum food requirements. Chiefs were even more vigilant on those growers who had already diversified their rural economy by adding cash crops to their farming schedule. In short, even though the approach of the colonial regime and the ECGC in Swaziland had continuously favoured the entrenchment of the capitalist mode of production, there were other powerful forces which created contradictions in the applicability of the system.

It would, however, be wrong to assume that this challenge to the capitalist mode of production was commonplace throughout the cotton producing areas. In Bremersdorp, for instance, companies and settler farmers succeeded to establish themselves and attracted adequate workers to their cotton farms. The Swaziland Corporation, for instance, owned a farm in Ngqulwini, whose operation depended entirely on the corporation's success to cajole tenants to remain there but on reasonable terms, especially after the *en mass* movement of Swazis to reserves was gazetted in 1914.<sup>54</sup> Some of the Swazi had preferred to remain on the farm as tenants, whereby they paid rent either in kind by agreeing on a specific number of workdays per year or in cash. These tenants were not free to go and work wherever they chose in order to pay rent to the company. Instead they worked on the farm for cash. The money earned was used to pay rent, and this latter form of tenancy was encouraged by the company by expanding the amount of land on which tenants settled as an attraction to keep them there. In the long term, such an arrangement worked out in the interests of the company because labour was in dire demand. It was tenants such as these on Peebles north and south in the south east of Manzini (then Bremersdorp), that there emerged a group of tenant cotton producers from 1926.<sup>55</sup> In the long run this arrangement enabled the company to beat its counterparts in the cut-throat competition for the diminishing numbers of Swazi labourers, and this development has also been touched upon by Crush.<sup>56</sup> Though these Swazi growers were tenants, their mode of production was partly capitalist and partly pre-capitalist and

was carried out under the close supervision of the management on the farm. The seeds used, the planting time, and the whole technology involved in the production cycle were provided by the management. The labour was partly provided by members of the family of the tenant, at weeding and harvesting time.

Cotton is labour intensive in weeding because the fields need to stay clean until the harvest period is over to avoid soiling the lint. Harvesting also had to be completed by early July to protect the lint from the dust during the windy month hence the need to expand one's workforce to shorten the time that could have otherwise been spent on the cotton fields.<sup>57</sup> After the crop was harvested the profits were distributed according to the costs of the inputs expended on the production, tenants were contented with the deal though they were exploited. However, this view was not expressed and approved by all tenants on the farm. First, the money they earned could not be reinvested either in the purchase of part of the land they tilled, nor in the equipment nor even cattle because it was too small. Second, as tenants, the regulations which governed their stay on the farm were very strict on the freedom of the type of crops each tenant grew, except for those which were desired by the company, such as maize and cotton. Third, the cotton they produced could only be sold direct to the company and not to any other buyer. By this time there were at least three other alternative buyers in the region. These were the Power Company in Bremersdorp, Clark in Mafutseni, and finally Cotona who operated through agents such as the South African buses which left Swaziland for Kempton Park in Johannesburg.<sup>58</sup> Denial of freedom to sell where the producer chose was representative of some degree of exploitation. At least the conduct of closing down all possible avenues of marketing to the people did suggest exploitation.

It is, however, a fact that since 1922, as Table A indicates, cotton production showed some upward expansion on private farms. The old problems which pushed Swazi endeavours to the background were neglected. The adverse impact of the intervention of chiefs on cotton created many production problems. In a bid to avoid any form of harassment, Swazi

growers responded by using hidden areas, which were difficult to visit by any form of transport other than on foot. In the case of Ngololweni, which lay south of Hlathikhulu, some cotton was grown in the deep valley of Mahonti and other valleys which were believed, by many in the area, to harbour evil spirits due to the thickness of the forests. Often strange noises, neither those of birds nor of any known animal, were common both at night and in broad daylight.<sup>59</sup> It was here that some residents of the area went ahead to grow the crop. Due to the history behind the successful production of other crops in the valleys there was an indication that the valley provided an alternative venue for businesses that were anathema. It is factual that even today the valley makes travelling very treacherous, even on foot. However, the formidable nature of the valley has since waned as a result of the declining vegetation due to lack of adequate rainfalls and also due in part to human intervention which led to the felling down of trees and the cultivation of some crops there. After the cultivation had gone on repeatedly, without the area allowed to go fallow to recover its virginity, the thickness and fearful nature of the forest was reduced very drastically. But be that as it may, the problems have been an obstruction to transport to the present day, except for the usage of portorage, a historical form of transport in that area.<sup>60</sup>

Transport between the valley and the settlements of the area posed a big problem. The transportation of inputs did not give the people a nightmare; the problem concerned the transfer of the harvest up hill. Neither could donkeys be used satisfactorily nor was the sledge a palliative to the transport problem. Portorage seemed the only solution, and in many ways it answered the problems which surrounded the transportation enigma. Sometimes portorage was supplemented with the use of donkeys, whereby two bags equivalent to 40 kgs or more each had their outlets rolled up together very tight and loaded on the back of donkeys. These donkeys were driven on some cleared pathway big enough for only one donkey to pass through at a time with the load on the back. These donkeys sometimes went out of control and ran into the forest with the load. Often times this resulted in the bags being torn and the contents scattered all

over the escape pathway. Maize grains spread all over the place thereby causing some considerable loss. In the case of cotton, whenever a donkey behaved in this manner the lint was mixed up with dry leaves of trees or the soil, which resulted in the quality being affected. However, other growers tied these donkeys with some rope and led by pulling the rope up the slope. Though there was no guarantee that these donkeys would not rebel, chances for a rebellion were reduced to a minimum than being completely eliminated. In other instances, donkeys rolled on the ground with the load, with adverse effects on the quality of the crop.<sup>61</sup>

On the other hand, portering was popular and also more reliable than donkey transport. Members of each family participated very effectively, sometimes along with invited members of the extended family, other relatives and friends. Not every member of the extended family was asked for assistance except for the responsible so that they did not create unnecessary problems which could cause the spoilage of the harvest. In other cases the transport which involved members of the extended family were treated like *lilima'*, communal labour. The rewards were customarily in kind: that is, either the host slaughtered a beast and apportioned it among the participants or cooked and provided it as victuals along with some traditionally prepared mild and alcoholic drinks. But these transport problems were partially solved, in the 1930s by the royal appeal to the chiefs to support the cultivation of cotton, because from then onwards cotton cultivation became official and the construction of roads was no longer a secret. However, these roads needed some constant maintenance because of heavy rains which fell and ruined them due to the sloping gradient.<sup>62</sup>

In the long run, the fertile soils of the valley offered some avenues to the diversification of the rural economy. For instance, they began to cultivate tobacco there, but other crops like sorghum and maize could not be grown due to rodent ravages. Initially, the cultivation was carried out with the hand-hoe and the trenches dug had to be deep. However, as the cotton area increased per grower, the plough became a necessity, and the

problem of digging out tree stumps and roots became unavoidable. In order to reach the fields with the plough and equipment for inspanning the oxen, family labour was harnessed to take the equipment, plough and drive the oxen to the valley where the business took place. Driving the oxen unspanned was not a big problem but inspanning them outside the valley could have required clearing up some part of the forest for a pathway to allow the oxen to pass through. The growers did not want to do the latter since it could have attracted the attention of the chief who might have wanted to know what was happening in the valley. This venture was unavoidable due to the fertility of the soil made possible by the debris from the trees. Compost manure was used by the growers to restore the exhausted soils and the valley continued to support the families in that way.<sup>63</sup>

Having come from a similar geopolitical region in Magudu, the demonstrator, Madevu Kheswa, showed some immense appreciation of the production problems of Swazi cotton growers. In a gesture of solidarity with the growers, he investigated the validity of the chief's opposition to cotton cultivation in Ngololweni. His findings were contrary to the allegations made by the growers: the *Nduna*, 'chief's administrative assistant',<sup>64</sup> had used the name of the chief to stop cotton cultivation, due to jealousy. Those who were aware that the chief was not after all opposed to the scheme had cultivated cotton inspite of the scare raised by others, and the history of E.P. Dlodlu discussed below is a case in point. The growers of cotton at Mahonti assumed that since those who did not hide cotton cultivation were relatives of the chief, the latter had acted out of nepotism to discourage cotton cultivation by non-relatives.<sup>65</sup> In 1929 Kheswa had advocated the transfer of the project to the open where the transport problems were not as daunting as those experienced in the valley. However, Kheswa returned to Zululand before the change had been completed in 1929.<sup>66</sup> At first the Mahonti project was very limited in extent when one considers that each grower cultivated cotton between one and two acres with the output ranging between one and a half bags of 50 kg each of seed cotton.<sup>67</sup> What seems to have been limiting factors were the difficulties involved in the transportation of the commodity.

However, its importance, in spite of its limited scale, was the success with which the growers by-passed labour migration particularly to the distant settler farms and even to South Africa. Secondly, the taboo with which the valley had been held was brought to an end in due course in an attempt to respond to the incentive to trade.

Cotton cultivation penetrated almost every group of the population and not just capitalists like settlers and planters but even pastors: leaders of churches. The roots of cotton production by church leaders went back to post World War One, but did not make any material progress until the late 1920s.<sup>68</sup> The reasons for the lack of progress to the end of the 1920s are hard to establish, except perhaps to suggest that lack of marketing facilities probably arrested progress. The pioneers were Samuel Simelane, who grew up in Sandleni and later moved to the south east of Hluthi, Thwala of Sandleni, Dlodlu of Ngololweni, Dlamini of Ngudzeni, and Samuel Fakudze of Macetsheni, in Bulungu. Among these pastors existed some relationship, Dlodlu was a brother-in-law of Dlamini, because the latter married a sister of the former. Fakudze was a cousin of Dlamini which made the three to be related to one another. Dlamini and Dlodlu are the ones whose history of cotton cultivation produces more flashes than the others, though the others became forces to reckon with in the 1930s.<sup>69</sup> Simelane is the only surviving member, whom the writer was able to interview from time to time since July 1980.<sup>70</sup> In the case of the other two, only relatives were approached and willingly provided the answers sought. In addition to the relatives, members of their churches were interviewed, and both groups were very helpful in filling existent gaps in the study.<sup>71</sup>

Most people had the impression that pastors did not indulge in business since that would contradict their sermons on rendering to Caesar what was Caesar's and to God what was God's. However, Dlodlu displayed virtues of a businessman in that the maize surplus he produced was sold for cash. He also sold some beans to his community. He also grew crops like cotton. The field on which he had grown cotton has now been given the name



'kotini', literally meaning that it once belonged to cotton. Dlodlu was also reported to have been inspired by one missionary Jackson who came to the country and settled at present-day Franson Christian Mission Station, which became the local headquarters of all the branches of the mission in the country. The missionary was the head of the station from the early 1910s. But because the whole idea of cotton production was very hazy, Dlodlu had not expanded its production until the 1920s when its production had expanded greatly, and output at national level reached hundreds of thousands of lbs, as shown in Table A. Second, the price of the crop had improved considerably over the pre-war price level. His justification for the project was to provide employment to Swazi young men, particularly those who already had families and whose migration to industrial South Africa could have caused social dislocations.<sup>72</sup> The effects of migration on the families had not at all been constructive. In essence, the pastor's objective was not necessarily to start a business that would continuously depend on the employment of the local population, rather he aimed to use his field for demonstration lessons for the students to use the knowledge acquired to grow cotton for a livelihood. The cotton project was allegedly not popular with the chief of the area but since it was supported by the Cotton Committee, his challenge was seen as defiance to the committee project.<sup>73</sup>

At first the response from the local men was very poor until 1932, when the king intervened and challenged chiefs and their subjects to incorporate cotton in their rural economies.<sup>74</sup> But since the market was not very profitable, Dlodlu encouraged his clients to cultivate it along with crops like beans and step up maize production because the market for these crops was already available even in local trading stores. He piloted the entrepreneurship by teaching his students the diversification of the rural economy, which involved, not only crop production, but even animal husbandry. Before the World Slump of 1929-31, he is reported to have owned about 100 heads of cattle, which he sold from time to time. His area was not settled by European farmers due mainly to its remoteness from business centres and main roads. Motor transport posed a big problem due to the

impassable rivers and hills which surrounded the area.<sup>75</sup> Similar observations were made by J. B. Webster in his study of African Churches in West Africa where Yoruba church leaders took to the production of cash crops in order to raise funds for the development of their areas.<sup>76</sup> For the Ngololweni community the only means of transport used was portage and donkey transport. The texture of the soils did not encourage the two features of farming: pastoral and agricultural. Large-scale pastoral farming lay north west of Ngololweni, approximately thirty kilometres from the Mission Station. But since pastoral farming had offered only a limited number of job opportunities most of the able-bodied men travelled long distances, sometimes as far to the north as Hlathikhulu, which was more than 50 kilometres and they remained there for a month before they could visit their families. Thwala and Simelane had done the same at Sandleni but with disappointing results compared to Dlodlu.<sup>77</sup> However, they succeeded to improve the financial position of their families while their impact on the communities in which they lived remained very minimal.

At Ngudzeni, Dlamini, who carried out his farming rather as an individual to improve, first and foremost his family's economy and then that of the community, did very well much against the chagrin of the local chief. It is, however, debatable if his progress in farming was to the benefit of his family *per se*, especially when one considers that as a pastor he had to respond to the needs of his family and those of the community in which he lived and ministered to, particularly members of his church. Having begun to grow cotton by 1926, in response to his brother-in-law's incentive and that of the Roman priest who was his neighbour in Maloma it took him two years to realise any progress. From his apologetic acreage at the beginning in 1926, Dlamini was able to expand from 3 acres in 1926 to 6 acres in 1928. That expansion was also reflected in the amount of the labour force which rose from 5 in 1926 to 15 in 1928 and this labour worked along with family members.<sup>78</sup> Most of these workers did not want to be paid in cash for their services but with maize, because their fields had not produced enough to provide for their families. Dlamini's expansion in cotton

production was slow due to the marketing problems and the impact it had on capturing the labour in the community from migrating was very weak. The marketing of the crop could only be done either at Nsoko, which was about 40 kilometres south of the area, or at Mbulungwane, 43 kilometres north west. Donkeys were used to transport the crop. At Nsoko, the crop was sold to the Nsoko Cotton Plantation Company who also produced cotton there and sold it directly to Durban from where it was shipped to England.<sup>79</sup>

Swazi producers were denied the platform to voice their grievances against the system which subjected them to labourers until the settlers abandoned the undertaking at the outbreak of the world slump in 1929, when the highest cotton output was realised since its introduction in 1904. Though the cotton output was the highest on a national level, reaching 3,224,182 lbs seed cotton compared to 2,618,913 in the previous year, the earnings for the year 1929-30 were a mere £26,868 compared to £37,961 for the 1928-29 as in Table A. Not only was the impact reflected on European production which also slumped in the following year but even Swazi growers reduced the acreage hence the output which dropped drastically from the record crop of 3,224,182 lbs the previous year to a mere 1,532,132 in 1931. The rise in cotton output was due to the introduction of the U variety by the ECGC in the late 1920s whose resilience to pest attack was relatively high.<sup>80</sup> The earnings were even more depressing with the gross national returns of £9,578.<sup>81</sup> It was in 1931, that most settler producers left the enterprise and reverted to either pastoral farming or land speculation. So phenomenal was the slump that it pulled down the local market price from 5 pence per lb of seed cotton to a meagre 2 pence.<sup>82</sup> For capitalist growers the price represented no challenge when considering the production costs. It was at this point that the ECGC revised its approach to cotton production and instead of pampering company and settler agriculture at the expense of Swazi production, they turned towards the latter on the <sup>ASSUMPTION</sup> that since its production was pre-capitalist, cotton cultivation even at a slumped rate could still pay dividends.

In conclusion, the capitalist mode of production which had become predominant in cotton production, especially by the outbreak of the First World War, began to show signs of failure to sustain itself, a legacy inherited from the post 1910 era, when tenants were encouraged to feature in cotton production. This development was made even worse in 1917 when the Cotton Committee insisted on the inclusion of the Swazi grower in the production process instead of him to sell his labour to the European settler grower and to company plantations for meagre wages. Swazi growers became even more resistant to the wage labour system by the mid-1920s, especially when missionaries and other itinerant brokers appeared on the scene to encourage Swazi growers to take up the business. However, the concept of a market economy was still very low among many of these Swazi cultivators so that there was no material production by them until the outbreak of the World Slump in 1929, and its impact is treated in chapter three below.

#### NOTES

1. Sna Rcs 535/19 Empire Cotton Growing Committee to Resident Commissioner, support for Cotton Cultivation, 11 February, 1918; Rcs 320/20 Resident Commissioner to P. Pringle, Secretary of the European Farmers' Association on stopping Swazi Cotton Growing, 20 December, 1920.

2. Sna Rcs 320/20 Resident Commissioner's response to Pringle, 20 December, 1920.

3. Interview Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 21 July, 1979; Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 29 July, 1980; Nganga Mamba, Ngudzeni, 6 August, 1980. All these were interviewed on the progress of Ephraim Dlamini in his production of cotton; Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 August, 1980; and Madolo Dlamini, Mbulungwane, 16 August, 1980, both informants recalled Thwala's cotton cultivation.

4. On pastors' education, Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 18 August, 1980; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 18 August, 1980, were interviewed about Dlodlu's education to find out if education was a determinant for progress in farming. Ephraim Tsabedze,

Tshedze, 16 August, 1980; and Madolo Dlamini, Mbulungwane, 16 August, 1980, were interviewed on the level of education of Thwala; Samuel Simelane, Mgamudze, 20 October, 1980; Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 21 July, 1982, answered on behalf of Samuel Fakudze; for the official view, Sna Rcs 535/19 Resident Commissioner's response to Pringle, 11 June, 1919.

5. C.F.J. Muller, 500 Years: South African History (Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica, 1969) p. 189.

6. See Alan Pim, Financial and Economic Situation of Swaziland, (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1932), p. 27; J.S. Crush, The Struggle for Swazi Labour, 1890-1920, (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1987) p.72; Brian Allan Marwick, The Swazi: An Ethnographic Account of the Natives of the Swaziland Protectorate, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940) p. 39.

7. Sna Rcs 370/17 Cotton Committee to Resident Commissioner on Cotton Growing by native people, 6 July, 1917; Rcs 383/17 Cotton Committee to the Resident Commissioner, Demonstration Plot, 4 February, 1917; Rcs 423/17 Cotton Committee report to Resident Commissioner on native response to the demonstration lessons, 18 August, 1917.

8. Sna Rcs 423/17 Pringle to the Government Secretary on association's concern about Native Cotton Growing, 20 August, 1917.

9. Sna Rcs 535/19 Taylor Report, Prospects for a cotton industry in Swaziland, December, 1919.

10. Empire Cotton Growing Review , vol. 1. January, 1924, no.1. p. 3.

11. See W.H. Scherffius & J.du Oosthuizen, "Cotton in South Africa", Central News Agency, Ltd., 1924, p.11. Swaziland was considered a part of South Africa which explains why prices for cotton in the latter was applied to the former territory.

12. Sna Rcs 493/20 W.B. Wilson, Cotton Advisor, to Government Secretary in support of Pringle's petition against Native Cotton Growing, 26 August, 1920; Rcs 298/20 Government Secretary to Wilson on Cotton Committee and Native Cotton Growing, 16 October, 1920.

13. Sna Rcs 298/20 Government Secretary to Wilson on Settler-Swazi grower cooperation on cotton production and marketing, 16 October, 1920. Interview on the price of seed cotton, Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 August, 1980; and Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 6 August, 1980.
14. Sna Rcs 535/19 Pringle to the Resident Commissioner on Native Cotton Growing, 21 August, 1919; and Rcs 298/20 Government Secretary to Resident Commissioner about the association's attempts to discourage Native Cotton Growing, 12 September, 1920.
15. Sna Rcs 535/19 Government Secretary report on the impact of the influenza outbreak on agriculture in Swaziland, August, 1919, p.9.
16. Sna Rcs 535/19 Government Secretary report on the expansion of Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 18 October, 1919, p.5.
17. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 26 June, 1986; Mahova Lugogo, Ngololweni, 26 June, 1986.
18. Sna Rcs 493/20 Report of the Government Secretary on cotton expansion in Swaziland, May, 1920. p. 7.
19. Sna Rcs 298/20 Resident Commissioner to Pringle on Native Cotton Growing, 20 December, 1920; Rcs 493/20 Wilson to Resident Commissioner- reaction to Pringle's petition which Wilson supported, 25 December, 1920; Rcs 318/20 Resident Commissioner to Pringle's petition on the spread of pests following Native Cotton Growing, October, 1920.
20. See J.S. Crush, 1987, op cit. p.179.
21. M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds), 1971, op cit. p. 122.
22. See Alan Pim, 1932, op cit. p. 27; interview Mveli Nyatsikati, Mtsambama, 29 December, 1982.
23. See J.S. Crush, 1987, op. cit. p.29.
24. Ibid. p. 179.
25. For some comparison between the cost of living and the wage range, again see J.S. Crush, 1987, op. cit. p.186.
26. Ibid. p. 58.
27. Sna File 452, Government Secretary's report on Swazi reactions to mass eviction from settler farms, 11 August, 1916.
28. Sna Rcs 493/20 Wilson to Government Secretary on the danger of Native Cotton Growing, 20 October, 1920; Rcs 833/19



Pringle to Government Secretary, on the subject of cotton pests, January, 1919; Rcs 318/20 Resident Commissioner to Wilson on his claims that Swazi growers were responsible for the spread of pests, 21 May, 1920.

29. This information is based on the samples that were carried out on these places on field work. The ratio was one plough to 3 homesteads. Most of the progressive farming homesteads had two polughs each which boosted the average ratio of a plough per homestead. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 11 August, 1982; Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 15 August, 1982; Mnukwa Nyatsikati, Mtsambama, 7 September, 1982; B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 28 July, 1983; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 20 July, 1980, 4 August, 1980, 8 September, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 8 September, 1980.

30. Sna File 1500 Department of Agriculture Report on Rural Development and progress, September, 1921; interview Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 15 August, 1982, confirmed that this was true particularly among those Swazi who grew maize and other crops, especially cotton.

31. Sna Rcs 751/23 Wilson to the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, on advising Swazi growers since that gap had been filled by some European settlers; Rcs 338/23 Swaziland Power Company to the Resident Commissioner distinguishing Swazi cotton from that of settlers, 10 September, 1923.

32. Sna Rcs 338/23 G. Mill's report of Power Company on the areas which sold cotton to the company, 7 August, 1923.

33. Sna Rcs 74/21 Government Secretary to the Cotton Committee, reaction to the plans to form the ECGC, 11 March , 1921.

34. Sna Rcs 74/21 Cotton Committee to the Government Secretary on objectives for the formation of the ECGC, 21 November, 1920.

35. Sna Rcs 347/26 M. Milligan to the Government Secretary on the state of the cotton industry in Swaziland, 9 September, 1925.

36. Sna Rcs 639/26 Wilson to the Government Secretary on the danger of allowing Native growers to cultivate cotton, 11 November, 1926.

37. Sna Rcs 639/26 Milligan report on the spread of pests which he linked with Swazi Cotton Growing, November, 1926.

38. Interview Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 8 September, 1980; Ida Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 8 September, 1980; Madami Dlamini, Mafutseni, 21 September, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 21 August, 1980; Alfred Mabuza, Mafutseni, 21 August, 1980.
39. In the case of wage levels, see J.S. Crush, 1987, op. cit. p.179; interview Adam Mabuza, Dwaleni, 28 November, 1980; Melashwa Shongwe, Nietgegund, 28 November, 1980; and James Mamba, Dwaleni, 15 August, 1985.
40. Interview Adam Mabuza, Dwaleni, 28 November, 1980; James Mamba, Dwaleni, 15 March, 1985. These informants pointed towards a bag they thought was of the same weight as the one in which they baled and sold their cotton. According to present day weights the bag shown was approximately 50 kg. As regards the money they got from selling their cotton, they thought that it was between £6 and £10 per bag.
41. Interview Ida Mkhonta, Thunzini, 11 May, 1982; her reports were supported by those which were related by Madala Nhleko, Ngwane, 18 June, 1982. The weights mentioned here along with the income realised are similar to that explained in note 40 above.
42. Sna Rcs 285/09 Government Secretary report on Cotton Growing in Swaziland, the case of the Henderson Corporation, 10 August, 1909. On the weights and income realised from Cotton Cultivation at that time see note 40 above.
43. Sna Rcs 386/27 Swaziland Corporation report on its Cotton Experiments in Bremersdorp during the season 1926/27, 21 October, 1927; but for the bus sales; interview B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 October, 1980.
44. Interview B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 October, 1980; Dinah Manana, Lwandle, 11 October, 1980. B.M. Manana had a cousin among the cotton growers of Lwandle, Albion Nxumalo, who had a similar experience, the cheating which was practised by some buyers.
45. Interview Melashwa Shongwe, Nietgegund, 28 November, 1980; Mnukwa Nyatsikati, Mtsambama, 7 September, 1982. These people are among the old residents of the area who took part in cotton production, and still had vivid memories of what happened.



46. Sna Rcs 383/17 Cotton Committee to Government Secretary on the promotion of Cotton Growing in Swaziland, 5 November, 1917; Rcs 74/21 Cotton Committee report on its plans to form the ECGC, 11 September, 1920.
47. Sna Rcs 298/20 Wilson to the Resident Commissioner on Native Cotton Growing, 17 November, 1920; interview Melashwa Shongwe, Nietgegund, 20 July, 1983.
48. Interview John Douglas Scot, Luve-Manzini, 11 October, 1980.
49. See Roger Southall, "Farmers, Traders and Brokers in the Gold Coast Cocoa Economy", Canadian Journal of African Studies, 12, 2 (1978) pp. 185-211; J. Miles, "Rural Protest in the Gold Coast: The Cocoa Hold-ups, 1908-38", C.J. Dewey & A.G. Hopkins(eds) The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India, (London: The Athlone Press, 1978) pp. 152-153.
50. Sna Rcs 202/36 J.L. Clark letter to Government Secretary on possibilities of establishing a cotton gin in Swaziland, particularly in the lowveld of the country, 21 November, 1936; interview Madami Dlamini, Mafutseni, 20 July, 1980; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 20 July, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 20 July, 1980.
51. Sna Rcs 170/28 A.E. Language to the Government Secretary, seeking the right to erect a gin in the Goedgegun area to buy the cotton grown there, 20 September, 1927; interview Mrs. A.E. Language, Nhlangano, 14 July, 1986; 21 February, 1987.
52. Kcl. ms 290b Allister M. Miller Papers "Peebles Cotton Plantations", July, 1925; ms 727 "Peebles North: Mhuphi's people", January, 18, 1930.
53. Kcl ms 727 Allister M. Miller Papers "Peebles North: Mhuphi's People", January, 18, 1930; ms 254d Peebles south, 12 November, 1929; ms 290b "Peebles Cotton Plantations", July, 1925.
54. See J.S. Crush, 1987, op. cit. pp. 179-186.
55. Sna Rcs 347/26 Milligan to the Government Secretary on the factors which reduced cotton harvest among careless growers, 5 September, 1926; Rcs 493/20 Wilson report on the effects of late picking on the cotton lint, 26 December, 1920.
56. Sna Rcs 338/23 ECGC to Government Secretary about the erection of a ginnery, 25 January, 1923; Rcs 202/36 Clark to Government Secretary about establishing a gin in Mafutseni, 21

December, 1936; Rcs 834/23 Mill of Power Company to Government Secretary, 29 November, 1923.

57. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Moses Lugogo, Ngololweni, 11 April, 1988; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 11 April, 1988.

58. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Moses Lugogo, Ngololweni, 11 April, 1988.

59. Sna Rcs 170/28 Demonstrator (Kheswa) report on Cotton Growing in the Ngololweni area by Swazi growers, 19 June, 1928.

60. Sna Rcs 202/36 Clark letter to the Government Secretary about his plans to open up a ginnery to process Swazi grown cotton in the Lowveld, Mafutseni, 24 December, 1936.

61. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mahova Lugogo, Ngololweni, 21 June, 1986.

62. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986.

63. Interview Gali Dlamini, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1980; Mahova Lugogo, Ngololweni, 21 August, 1983.

64. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Sna Rcs 42/30 Department of Agriculture report on the progress of demonstrators, Shiselweni, 2 May, 1928.

65. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 27 November, 1987, whose memory even about her youth was very impressive, related the extent of cotton production, but in terms of morgens. As far as she could recall, the area that was cultivated with cotton ranged between one-half of a morgen to two morgens, particularly in the Mahonti Valley where one of her brothers also had a plot. One morgen is equal to about 2.11 acres.

66. Sna Rcs 170/28 Bhongoza Masango, Demonstrator to Wilson on progress by the Swazi growers of cotton in Bremersdorp, Samuel Fakudze, 21 March, 1928; Rcs 162/29 Department of Agriculture progress report to the Government Secretary on Cotton Growing in Shiselweni, 7 July, 1928; interview Ephraim

- Tsabedze, Tshedze, 20 July, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 20 July, 1980; B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 20 July, 1980.
67. Interview Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 25 March, 1979; Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 11 September, 1980 (on Ephraim Dlamini); Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987 (on Enock Dlodlu).
68. Interview Samuel Simelane, Mgamudze, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Masuku, Mgamudze, 20 October, 1980; Jotham Simelane, Mgamudze, 20 October, 1980.
69. Interview Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 5 March, 1979 (sister to Enock Dlodlu), Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987, 29 November, 1987.
70. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 12 October, 1987; Esau Ndlangamandla, Kaliba, 15 December, 1984.
71. Sna Rcs 535/19 Agricultural Department to the ECGC, Native growers, 11 February, 1918.
72. Sna Rcs 42/30 Department of Agriculture report on growers' opposition to Cotton Growing, November, 1930.
73. Sna Rcs 170/28 Kheswa report to the ECGC on the suitability of Ngololweni to Cotton Growing, 7 March, 1928; Rcs 639/26 demonstrator report to the department of agriculture on Swazi Cotton Growing, 10 May, 1926.
74. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Esau Ndlangamandla, Kaliba, 20 June, 1986.
75. Interview Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 5 March, 1979; Pauline Mamba, Ngudzeni, 5 March, 1979.
76. J.B. Webster, The African Churches Among the Yoruba, 1888-1922 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1964). pp. 114-123.
77. Sna Rcs 162/29 Government Secretary to Resident Commissioner on Nsoko Cotton Plantation, financial support to facilitate cotton transportation, 8 September, 1929; Rcs 631/26 Nsoko Cotton Plantation, Ltd. to Government Secretary, 10 May, 1926.
78. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 20 October, 1982; Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku,

Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mahova Lugogo, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986.

79. Interview Elaine Dludlu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mahova Lugogo, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986.

80. H. Hutchinson, "Cotton in Swaziland", Empire Cotton Growing Review, xxx 111 (1956) p. 94.

81. Sna Rcs 40/32 Department of agriculture report on the impact of the depressed market price of cotton and other crops, 9 November, 1932.

82. Sna Rcs 40/32 Department of Agriculture report on the impact of the depressed market price of cotton and other crops; Rcs 40/32 H. Hutchinson to Resident Commissioner on cotton in Swazi areas, 10 July, 1932.

TABLE. A.

Comparative Output and Value for Cotton and Tobacco, and the prices for cotton expressed in Average Liverpool American Middling, 1916-31.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>Cotton</u>		<u>Liverpool Price (pence)</u>	<u>Tobacco</u>	
	<u>Output</u>	<u>Value</u>		<u>Output</u>	<u>Value</u>
	(lbs)	(£)		(lbs)	(£)
	(000)	(000)		(000)	(000)
1916	-	-	-	-	-
1917	-	-	-	-	-
1918	2	-	22	-	-
1919	3	-	20	-	-
1920	411	10	25	1,035	26
1921	274	7	12	200	8
1922	142	2	11	214	5
1923	367	18	15	324	8
1924	783	6	18	241	8
1925	642	7	14	250	7
1926	1,243	14	11	780	23
1927	537	11	8	1,263	37
1928	851	14	11	1,283	37
1929	2,619	38	11	1,068	36
1930	3,224	27	9	578	14
1931	1,532	10	6	298	9

SOURCE: 1. SWAZILAND COLONIAL REPORTS FOR THE YEARS, 1916-1931.

2. EMPIRE COTTON GROWING CORPORATION: ANNUAL REPORTS of the Council for the years, 1922-26.

3. J.A. Todd, "Twenty Five Years of Cotton Prices", in Empire Cotton Growing Review, vol. xv October, 1938. p. 278.

4. Tobacco prices could not be included in the table because they were not available.

## CHAPTER THREE

THE WORLD SLUMP AND SWAZI COTTON CULTIVATION,  
1931-39.

In the 1930s the pressures of the market economy proved too strong for the triumvirate, formed of the Colonial State, the ECGC and the Chiefs (the custodians of the lineage mode of production), to continue to support the lineage mode of production which perpetuated the economic stagnation of the Swazi rural cultivators. The bonds that had held these repressive forces together, especially from the early 1920s, were thrown asunder by the wedge that hacked through the system by creating conditions that favoured the promotion of a market economy, especially among the long-neglected yet very significant factor in production in the rural agricultural economy: the Swazi cultivators.

The World Slump impact, as indicated in Table B. gave a clear indication of the direction cotton was to follow at the time under consideration. In 1929, when the cotton price per lb of lint declined from 15 pence in 1928 to 10.52,<sup>1</sup> not many growers had taken major steps to solve the problem of the slump. Apparently, producers understood the decline to be one of the previous fluctuations the business had once experienced, and one such memorable experience was in the years 1920-22, but then the recovery had taken place within a short time. Even then, the impact in terms of the difference between the good time price and the depressed one had not been as daunting as the one experienced in 1929. Evidence of the farmers' relaxed response to the depression is indicated in the output realised in 1929-30, at 3,224,182 lbs of seed cotton.<sup>2</sup> But due to the continued decline in the Liverpool price to 9.09 pence per lb of lint,<sup>3</sup> it became clear that cotton as a cash-earner, no longer paid reasonable dividends. In terms of the decline in the local price of seed cotton, the impact was even greater because it had slumped from 5 pence to a mere 2 pence per lb of seed cotton in 1930.<sup>4</sup> In

short, it was the local market price that sent a chilly message home and more faster than ever before to the producers of the commodity, particularly those who produced it on a large scale. While the acreage had gone up to 9,000 acres in the 1929-30 season,<sup>5</sup> the following year experienced some sharp decline due both to the late rainfalls and the slumped commodity price. So serious was the depression that in 1930-31, the acreage was reported to be very low. Though the actual figure could not be given, the impression derived from the sources was that it had slumped drastically, and was even worse in 1932, when it continued to drop down to a mere 1,000 compared to the record figure of 1929. In 1932 the output was placed at a mere 750,000 lbs of seed cotton on a nationwide level.<sup>6</sup>

By this time the ECGC had made some major accomplishments in cotton farming through its introduction of the U4 variety whose resistance to the jassid pest was so high that the pest did not worry the business as it had done in the mid-1920s. Having reached this level of achievement, the ECGC did not wish to abandon the project immediately as the settlers had done. In an effort to persist with the project, J.V. Lochrie, ECGC representative in Swaziland, worked with H. Hutchinson, specialist in cotton production and problems, who had also arrived in the country at the peak of the slump,<sup>7</sup> to help government solve cotton cultivation problems sought the support of the king (then paramount chief) and that of Swazi growers. First, H. Hutchinson plotted carefully to appeal to the king, since the latter was fully behind the stabilisation of food production and supply in the territory. As a result of this plot the king was asked by S.B. Williams, Manzini Resident Commissioner then to lobby the support of the chiefs in cotton production. Williams also drew the attention of Hutchinson to the fact that a Swazi producer's priority was to ensure that his family were satisfied in terms of food supply. Since at this juncture, food production suffered some sharp decline, 'the grow more food crops' campaign was being reinforced. These crops involved maize, sorghum, beans, and others which constituted foodcrops.<sup>8</sup> However, even though the other crops, apart from sorghum, were

grown, the latter could not be substituted with any other especially before maize had spread nationwide, and the production of sorghum had become a matter of necessity. In short, sorghum constituted a staple crop, and the others were minor to it. However, by the time of the World Slump, maize production had become more widespread than ever before, due to the dual role it played in the rural economy. In addition to being a foodcrop, maize could also be sold to trading stores either for cash or used as a currency to acquire certain manufactured goods. By the end of the 1920s, maize had become a very important crop in the rural economy and its production was extensive to the extent that when compared to sorghum production, the latter led maize only by a narrow margin. It was in 1932, for instance, that when the output in sorghum was 41,041 muids of 200 lbs, that of maize was 30,906 muids of 200 lbs.<sup>9</sup> In the following year, the output in maize in SNL was even more stable and exceeded that of sorghum.<sup>10</sup>

European settlers were first and foremost bent on capital accumulation hence their concentration on cash crops and pastoral farming, businesses which yielded good profits. When the market price of these cash crops, particularly that of cotton, slumped, they turned their attention to other businesses.<sup>11</sup> One of the major factors to consider here is that the land on which the business was carried out had been bought and ought to have yielded some profit over and above the money which was invested in it. When the business failed to do so, as the case was with cotton during the slump, other sources of revenue were established before the land became a liability.<sup>12</sup> In fact the whole system of production was capitalist while Swazi cultivators on the other hand relied on a non-capitalist system of production whose implication was that even when the business yielded the least of profits, the losses remained minimal compared to those of capitalists.<sup>13</sup> Since the Swazi had been competing with settlers for the cotton market from the outbreak of World War One, it could be said that the slump gave them some competitive advantage over their settler counterparts. But let it be noted that at the time discussed settlers were no longer producing cotton,



even those who persisted did so on a small scale which means that the latter were not engaged actively in market competition with the Swazi growers. It is also crucial to note that at this time Swazi cotton production was still hampered by the low market price and restricted to a minimum by chiefly opposition.<sup>14</sup>

Chiefly opposition to Swazi cotton production when compared with other counter-productive factors such as the slumped market price of the crop, becomes the lesser of the two obstacles that militated against the Swazi enterprise. Evidence to this point is provided by the reduced acreage under cotton even among those growers who had produced cotton before the slump, at a time when the business was still buoyant, and these were Ephraim Dlamini of Ngudzeni, Ephraim Tsabedze of Tshedze, and Enock Dlodlu of Ngololweni, to name only a few of those who were picking up the business with some flashes of success.<sup>15</sup> Yet another point to note is that chiefly opposition to Swazi cotton production was not new in the 1930s, but dated to the duration of World War One.

In areas which lay close to Bremersdorp, the base of the ECGC and that of the Resident Commissioner, S.B. Williams, some of those growers who were bold enough to report the threats chiefs uttered to them against cotton production, were saved from the economic stranglehold, while those in the remote areas continued to suffer. Growers in Bremersdorp also benefited from, and were saved by, the frequent visitations of the officials of the cotton corporation. These areas were Lwandle, Gundwvini, Mafutseni, Macetsheni, Bhekinkosi, (see sketch map) and others where chiefs feared that if they were discovered frustrating cotton production, they might lose their political status.<sup>16</sup> Brian Manana was among the first few Swazi officers of the department of agriculture to receive training inside the territory. He received his education at Matsapha government school where he obtained a primary school certificate at the end of Standard 4.<sup>17</sup> Manana was trained to become an agricultural officer on a government plot attached to Matsapha School, and was run by the department of agriculture. Manana also recieved lessons based

on the problems of cotton production in his training programme. In fact, Hutchinson had been allowed to select from Manana's group someone who would assist him in his field studies. Manana was actually responsible for monitoring the cotton project throughout the suited parts of the territory. He travelled together with Hutchinson sometimes to chiefs' administrative capitals where meetings were held with growers in the presence of their respective chiefs, so that no political issues were discussed apart from cotton.<sup>18</sup>

At these meetings seeds and insecticides were distributed to the growers. To whip up enthusiasm in the cultivators, the inputs were distributed free, although by the mid 1930s, some minimal charges were made against inputs distributed. However, the sale of the crop was left to the discretion of the growers. They were, nonetheless, advised to sell even to itinerant buyers particularly those who exported the crop to England such as Clark in the Mafutseni area, E.R.S. Cheales and Language in Hlathikhulu, and these brokers often competed with Cotona at Kempton Park, who handled the businesses through South African buses which operated from various parts of the territory.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand those growers who were not satisfied with the terms of trade offered by these itinerant buyers could sell to the administration through the department of agriculture at two pence per lb of seed cotton which was at par with that offered by some of the brokers.<sup>20</sup> The government had expected the price to motivate growers to produce more cotton than before, and in those areas where production had not started government hoped that a stimulus would be created. Manana was responsible for the purchase aspect along with the assistance of officers in the department of agriculture.

After his appointment, Manana was assigned to visit all potential cotton growing areas with the purpose of making his recommendations to the ECGC regarding the parts of the territory most suited to cotton production. Due to lack of efficient means of travelling, Manana relied on a bicycle to visit the areas he had been asked to investigate. Sometimes he travelled as far south as

the Mamba chiefdom, at Ngudzeni whose chief was Bhokweni Mamba. There were not enough growers at Ngudzeni to warrant the time it cost Manana to travel there.

The response of Swazi growers to cotton cultivation was lukewarm, in Bremersdorp, while in Shiselweni, yet another promising cotton producing area then, cotton was slightly more popular, but the extent of production was limited to one acre and sometimes upwards of six acres in other instances.<sup>21</sup> The impact of the slump could not be disregarded when decisions to produce the crop were made. Growers weighed the costs of production of one crop against others and in the case of cotton, the majority of the growers felt that the costs were too great when weighed against the returns. Implicitly, the slump provided alternatives to cotton and tobacco. It was, for instance, in the same period, from 1932, that demonstration work was stepped up by the agricultural officers. At this time the options to cotton and tobacco were many, and their production costs were low which explains the swing in favour of other options. Maize, for instance, though new, compared to sorghum, was tipped to expand faster than the other crops. The list was expanded in 1936, to include even beans, and pumpkins, all of which had a young but growing and lucrative market.<sup>22</sup> The production of these food crops became more attractive to growers than that of cotton because of the relatively lower production costs they involved producers in compared to cotton, particularly at a time when the profits were low. Second, there were more consumer markets for these crops, such as trading stores, most of which were within easy reach compared to the cotton markets. It was also during the slump that sweet potatoes, whose production history was already old, was considered an indigenous crop.<sup>23</sup> The fact was that in that desperate situation many solutions to economic problems were sought by the growers and the search had sometimes met with some success. In Swaziland, some emergency economic measures were taken to correct the situation. They proved successful and this explains the slow response of the Swazi to the development of cotton.

Swazi growers were also more receptive to the production of crops which did not require a major overhaul of their economic structure. Cotton interfered with many traditional economic activities. For instance, from March through to the end of May, there was an abundant supply of *marula* home-brewed beer. Usually afternoon hours were spent on leisure which involved the visiting of friends particularly among men. At these times they discussed political issues. Yet another activity carried out was hunting, most of which occurred in winter. During winter months chiefs also held meetings where cases were tried. At these meetings a roster was taken to find out who had not attended, and absence could easily lead to expulsion. All these activities lasted from morning to the late afternoon hours, which made it very difficult for other types of work to be carried out. In short, the picking of cotton could have been very difficult in the face of these problems. In this way the wishes of some of the chiefs to frustrate cotton cultivation were fulfilled. However, in the process, both the ECGC and the colonial state, had to work very hard to achieve the diversification of Swazi agriculture.<sup>24</sup> But the changes which occurred were in favour of the diffusion of the project of the ECGC and the colonial state. In short, the retention of the subsistence economy was strongly challenged by the gradual encroachment of the money economy, which revolved around production to meet market demands. The demands on the Swazi, to respond to those of the market economy, were no longer suppressible due to the new lifestyle evolved and this included the desire to buy western goods, and the sending of children to school.<sup>25</sup>

The 'grow cotton' message received different responses from one region to another. Some ministers of religion saw cotton production as the best means of earning money to meet financial needs, and to improve living standards. In Bremersdorp and Shiselweni, where some of the churchmen resided, cotton found markets among itinerant brokers along with the markets of the ECGC and the department of agriculture.<sup>26</sup> The conviction that cotton production would open up avenues for employment and provide other means of earning money, was the driving force

behind the cultivation of cotton by priests. The motto to grow cotton, was part of the main Sunday message and these gospels were promulgated by pastors at Sandleni, Ngololweni, Ngudzeni, and Samuel Fakudze of Macetsheni. Another objective was to discourage labour migration to South African mines and settler farms, and to distant local places of employment within the territory.<sup>27</sup> This, however, was meant specifically for married members of the affected families because the indefinite period of absence from home bred unpalatable social problems. It was argued that mines in distant South Africa were suited to the youth who did not have any social obligations to families. Consequently, cotton schemes were started and demonstration lessons were organised and local agricultural officers delivered the relevant lessons. In some places, it worked well while in others it did not have any effect. Most of these pastors had adequate seed supplies to distribute to their church members to grow cotton on their own fields.<sup>28</sup>

To understand the whole philosophy behind the setting up of these demonstration plots at the initiative of the pastors, one needs to look beyond merely what meets the eye. Chiefs' disapproval of the cultivation of cotton in some areas had persisted in some parts of the country. Pastors were aware of it and wanted to avoid open confrontation with chiefs. But knowing that the department of agriculture and the ECGC, were strongly behind the production of cotton on SNL, their involvement was an effective means of controlling the chiefs. After the department of agriculture agreed to monitor these projects, it became its direct responsibility to make sure that they were not stopped by chiefs. When chiefs' interference led to the abandonment of the schemes, these would be revived, but after they had reproached the chiefs for their disruption.<sup>29</sup> Through this approach, pastors appear to have been shrewd. This astute conduct did not stop there but also ensured a surplus in maize and other crops. The pastors succeeded well in their subversive activities against chiefs' attempts to maintain a subsistence economy. Their church members also became courageous to plant cotton with the

assurance of the department of agriculture against any form of intervention.<sup>30</sup>

Demonstration lessons engineered by pastors did not provoke uniform responses from church members. The Sandleni Community, for instance, did not respond with the same enthusiasm as that of Macetsheni, Ngudzeni and Ngololweni areas. At Sandleni, only two members are reported to have grown cotton before World War Two, while others responded after the war. Even the two early respondents began to grow cotton about 1934,<sup>31</sup> two years after the official appeal had been extended to them. Ephraim Tsabedze and Moses Dlakubi were the only two respondents who began to grow cotton in the 1930s. Tsabedze continued to grow cotton until very recently when he stopped on account of ill health. Tsabedze's home was about seven miles from that of Dlodlu at Ngololweni which made it possible for the two growers to cooperate on a number of issues which hinged upon cotton cultivation. These issues concerned marketing and the lack of technical assistance. Tsabedze confined his acreage to three acres between 1934 and 1936. The output was also unimpressive. He stated that the output did not exceed 2 bags of 200 lbs seed cotton per season,<sup>32</sup> and this was due to the poverty of the soil which he cultivated. Compared to the dark brown and compact loamy soil on which Dlodlu grew cotton, Tsabedze's fields were found in an area whose soil was loose and sandy, which required large amounts of inputs mainly kraal and compost manure, both of which were in inadequate supply. Unless these inputs were applied to the soil on a yearly basis, the surplus generating capacity of the soil declined along with the output. But that was not the main cause for the poor response of the people to cotton production in Tsabedze's area. Tsabedze alleged that most of the people who avoided cotton completely, did so due to indolence because some of them failed even to raise enough food to feed themselves. These people were lazy to the extent that they even neglected to transport kraal manure to their fields to help raise the productivity of the soil especially when it showed signs of failure to give a handsome output.<sup>33</sup> In some cases even the weeding of maize fields was either half done

or neglected altogether, and the result was either a reduced output or no output at all, depending on the thickness and destructive effects of the weeds. Secondly, the climatic conditions of the area were more suited to the production of maize and other crops grown in temperate regions. Thirdly, the distance between the area and the cotton market was rather too long and daunting to some potential growers.<sup>34</sup>

Having confined his cotton production to three acres until 1936, the output was not impressive. When Tsabedze sold two bags in 1936 he had received £6 as being the total income made through cotton cultivation, yet 1936 represented a fair season. The main cotton buyer in the area in that year was Cheales whose base was Goedgegun, and he paid a price ranging from 2d and 4d per lb of seed cotton.<sup>35</sup> The quality of the crop was the main determinant of how much the broker paid and Tsabedze's crop had not been very impressive that year due to some pest attack. But yet another very important aspect was that if the broker provided transport the charges were borne by the producer which explains why the price was low apart from the fact that the crop was also unimpressive. Due to the hazardous roads, transport costs were rather too high for most of the producers. However, Tsabedze did not give up cotton cultivation in spite of the costs which had weighed heavily on the growers, and he was actually saved by the fact that he succeeded to persuade Dlodlu to pool their resources together to lessen the transport costs. What encouraged the two to persist with cotton cultivation was the fact that they hoped that the department of agriculture would provide a local market in due course so that the transport costs could be reduced, and the promises for accessible markets had been made by the agricultural officers. Having persisted with their request, until 1936, the ministry of agriculture with the help of the ECGC made some provision that Swazi growers could sell their cotton through the local officers of the agricultural department. In fact this latter arrangement was expected to last for a short time because the department had hoped to persuade some of the brokers in Goedgegun to play an effective role in marketing. But due to the unencouraging state of

the roads then, the brokers were reluctant to provide the transport; rather they were ready to purchase any cotton that was brought to them by producers. In view of these problems, the two growers chose to sell their cotton to the market that had been provided by the agricultural department in conjunction with the ECGC.<sup>36</sup> While brokers were helpful to provide the market for cotton they were reluctant to provide financial assistance. They did, however, provide seeds at reduced prices, but since the department of agriculture had provided these free, the brokers were supplanted by the department.

Chiefs had not regarded brokers as being subversive to the maintenance of the *status quo* because brokers were merely interested in the output and not in the cultivation of the crop.<sup>37</sup> However, chiefs' opposition was already losing the impact it had had on cotton production save only in a few instances. Most of the growers gave the impression that showing disregard for the untoward attitude of the chiefs, the latter recoiled and expressed their disapproval of cotton cultivation in other ways. For instance, whenever new applications were handed in for some additional land chiefs turned a deaf ear to these appeals. In the chiefs' view the cultivation of cotton meant that the producer had some surplus land, hence the chief refused to grant some additional land. Jeered applicants often took it up with the department of agriculture who intervened on their behalf. These were the experiences of the cotton producers of those parts of the territory which were suited to cotton production. Dlamini at Ngudzeni, for instance, had these experiences in 1936 when the chief (Bhokweni) challenged him on the question of land additions.<sup>38</sup>

Confrontations with chiefs were dreaded by many growers, as in the case of the Mahonti Valley. (see above pp.39-43). There could not be a better indication of the degree of dread some chiefs commanded among their people. Fear superceded the respect traditional authorities commanded among their people. Yet in most cases a chief was made to appear ignominiously rude and merciless by the *Nduna*, administrative officer, who assisted to run the affairs of the chiefdom. It was in Ngololweni that the



order not to grow cotton was sent to growers, and was thought to have come from the chief, yet it was the making of the *Nduna*. The impact resulted in the misinvestment of human resources and the unnecessary risks to which growers exposed themselves to redeem the rural poverty of the time. But even after the alleged opposition of the chief to cotton production had been cleared, the people continued to grow cotton there. However, cotton production in the valley in the mid 1930s, was accompanied by an addition of other crops due to the fertility of the valley, and secondly, due to the fact that transport difficulties had been alleviated through the construction of a road, reasonably good cotton harvests were realised, and the valley also produced impressive harvests of maize and sweet potatoes in the late 1930s.<sup>39</sup> These variables are very important to consider if one is to understand the persistence of growers to use the Mahonti Valley in spite of its hazards.

When one makes an overview of the spread of cotton cultivation at this time, it is evident that the expansion was very slow and even the extent of the production was insignificant. But one major, and striking observation is that those who grew cotton emerged as well-to-do members of their communities relative to the group who did not take it seriously. The well-to-do extended their farming commitments from cotton to the production of other crops, and that opened up other avenues of trade for them. In due course, their socio-economic status improved. It was among such growers that modern houses were built; modelled on those of the European settlers. They owned a variety of farming equipment, like the plough, planter, weeder and others. Tsabedze, Dlodlu and Dlamini, owned more than just one equipment of each kind so that whenever the other was broken and still being repaired, the other could be used to continue with the business. In a nutshell, the acquisition of this equipment freed labour power for other economic activities, and this explains why some growers could afford to combine cotton cultivation with other options with some reasonable success without any need to hire more labour, except in cases where there was an expansion in the area under cultivation. These

producers also boasted of a food surplus, especially when the climatic conditions were favourable.<sup>40</sup>

Already the discussion has encroached upon the terrain of technology which facilitated production by providing time and labour saving devices. Yet another issue that needs elaboration is that of land upon which the expanding list of crops was grown. Though some chiefs did not frustrate cotton cultivation openly, they hindered it in some very shrewd ways. Some growers approached those Swazi clans who had some surplus land which they did not necessarily need for crop production every year. This practice was referred to as *kubolekisa* (the 'loaning') of the land for a specific period of time. Its renewal was acceptable, and was determined by the amicable relations between the two parties. According to Swazi custom, land was not owned privately nor was it marketable. Granted that this was normal practice, there were nonetheless numerous cases where some Swazi claimed land to be their property to the extent that even the chief could not intervene to redistribute it; rather it was distributed by the clan head of the people to whom it belonged.<sup>41</sup> Historically, such land was inherited after the intruders, who had expanded from Tongaland, settled in present Swaziland, and dispossessed pre-existing ethnic groups. The land on which they settled according to clans, became clan-land and its allocation was vested in clan leaders. Traditionally, such land was allocated for a specific period of time, at the end of which it reverted to the owner. Sometimes the owner asked for certain services or some tangible item, for usufructuary rights to the land. If the land was used to plant cash crops, either a goat or a cow was given for the usufructuary rights of the land. In short, these were the means by which chiefs, who frustrated cotton growing in the 1930s, were by-passed.<sup>42</sup>

These obstacles were experienced in Ngudzeni by Dlamini who was summoned by Bhokweni to explain his objective behind cotton production. The chief asked him to stop cotton cultivation, but he did not. Additional land posed a big problem which he solved by asking his friends among the Mkhumane and Nhleko

clans who possessed large pieces of land, and they came to his rescue.<sup>43</sup> Dlamini's cotton fields were found some 6 miles away from the mission station, and in some place hidden from the everyday view of the chief. This is an indication that even though the cotton growers knew that they could seek the protection of the king against recalcitrant chiefs, for their security in the immediate area, they remained on amicable terms with their chiefs by avoiding open confrontation. The arguments of the chief against cotton cultivation were that its widespread cultivation would lead to the multiplication of pests harmful not only to cotton but to the other crops as well. Secondly, he argued that cotton was destructive to the soil, and if grown annually, the soil lost its fertility. Only the latter point sounded more plausible because it was based upon some empirical evidence. But since the grower was aware of all these problems, he had counteracted both the spread of pests, and that of soil exhaustion through the use of insecticides and crop rotation respectively. Dlamini was known to be one of the best and diligent growers. In the mid 1930s, when he grew cotton on more than six acres, he also harvested a bumper maize crop. Those in the area, whose crops had failed to produce a reasonable harvest in maize and could not provide even for domestic requirements, traded in grain with Dlamini. In short, the grounds for the chief's accusation were unfounded in certain instances because the grower had sprayed his cotton satisfactorily, and destroyed cotton trees at the end of the harvest.<sup>44</sup>

In the mid 1930s, Dlamini grew cotton and sent it for sale at Mbulungwane and Nsoko. Clark, at Mafutseni, expanded south east to Maloma, where they were attracted by Dlamini's cotton. J.L. Clark and Company and Cotona had originally come from the Transvaal, and were among the first cotton brokers to have expanded to the Barberton region and Swaziland. They had followed wherever the ECGC promoted cotton cultivation, so that they could provide an alternative market for the crop. Initially Clark had handled cotton as merchants who shipped it via the port of Durban to its destination in England, but when the costs of exporting the crop exceeded the profits, Clark began to find

alternative markets in Johannesburg, where some manufacturing groups had already established themselves.<sup>45</sup> In Swaziland, Clark was confined to Bremersdorp though in 1936 they expanded to Maloma. Clark did not establish any credit facilities for the Swazi cotton growers because they feared that they might not get any profits from such an investment. Chiefs' opposition to cotton, might frustrate the endeavour, and this was known to Clark. Consequently, their involvement was confined to the transaction aspect of the business *per se*. Dlamini's cotton production had been revealed to Clark by Manana.<sup>46</sup> However, the mere fact that Clark bought the crop was a relief to those growers who were far from markets, particularly at the time when marketing was still poor. Maloma was also isolated from the centre where technical assistance came, and in the case of Maloma the offices of the department of agriculture were in Hlathikhulu. Demonstrators, who either walked or cycled there, had found it very difficult to visit places in the lowveld such as Maloma.<sup>47</sup> This gap was sometimes filled in by brokers, whose advice on technology was not even scientific but based on what observation they had acquired elsewhere.<sup>48</sup>

Swazi entrepreneurship of this early period was not necessarily determined by favourable factors either for production or marketing. After 1931, the market conditions continued to frustrate the Swazi endeavour to produce cotton, because the local price of seed cotton remained at 2 pence per lb in spite of the 1937 price rise to 7 and 5 pence per lb of cotton lint which ruled to the outbreak of World War Two in 1939.<sup>49</sup> The political atmosphere was not encouraging either but in spite of all these problems perseverance kept the growers going. In some regions, such as Bremersdorp, which were close to the Resident Commissioner's office, and to the office of the ECGC and the department of agriculture, chiefs were intimidated by the proximity of these centres which supported the cotton scheme. It was these factors that facilitated the emergence of some entrepreneurs in this region. Remarkable among these was Matsafeni Dlamini of Mafutseni, east of Bremersdorp, about 5 kilometres away from the town. Having started cotton growing in

the late 1920s, Matsafeni had mastered the know-how of cotton production by 1932. It was in 1932 that his output exceeded his record of 3308 lbs seed cotton in 1931, on an acreage of about 6 and 8 in 1932 and 1933. In terms of the cotton output in 1932 and 1933, the difference was about 2,158 lbs over that of 1931, since in the years 1932 and 1933 he realised 5466 and 5459 lbs seed cotton respectively, in spite of the low price at 2 pence per lb of seed cotton.<sup>50</sup> Hutchinson provided transport to the grower, when other growers elsewhere were not given this type of treatment. His argument was that it would be cheaper to transport the crop from Mafutseni than from distant places such as Shiselweni, where other prospective growers such as Tsabedze, Dlundlu and Dlamini were found. Yet another variable which militated against the intervention of the ECGC in those remote areas was the bad state of the roads which connected the market and the south.<sup>51</sup>

According to Manana, whose testimony has coincided repeatedly with that of archival sources, Samuel Fakudze cultivated cotton from 1927 near his home which was close to present day Sibisisweni High School, in Macetsheni.<sup>52</sup> After he had started on a one acre plot, his project attracted Bhongoza Masango, an agricultural officer in the region whose duty at that time was to carry out demonstration lessons, and he supported Fakudze by providing the technical aspect of the course. The supply of seeds and even the marketing of the crop were made possible by Masango's help who supplied the seeds and arranged some transport from the Power Company to fetch cotton from Fakudze's plot. Masango had visited many growers, even Matsafeni and colleagues, to provide technical guidance to them. Masango, like Kheswa, had his roots in South Africa, where he was born and trained in agricultural farming. Like all other agricultural officers in Swaziland, Masango had travelled on a cycle from one area to the next within Bremersdorp. He was as dedicated to his work as his colleague Kheswa, and it was due to his devotion to agricultural farming that he helped to raise the standard of farming in the areas that were settled by

conscientious growers. Fakudze absorbed Masango's teachings and translated them accurately into his farming activities.<sup>53</sup>

Unlike Dlamini, Dlodlu, Thwala, and Simelane, who headed branches of foreign churches, Fakudze led a Zionist church, which was indigenous, in so far as it was independent of the domination of foreign doctrines of christianity. The Zionist church interpreted the teachings of the bible from the local perspective. Any passage read in church was localised and used to understand political, social and economic problems of the time. For instance, at the time of the campaign to grow cotton particularly by Swazi growers, in 1932, Fakudze had taken it to mean the emancipation of the Swazi from the bondage of social oppression. This applied particularly to the labour migrants to South Africa and even to those who were employed locally, but on distant European plantations. In either case the wages along with the conditions under which the Swazi laboured were sub-human and oppressive. Yet if the Swazi responded positively to cotton production they could become self-reliant and emancipated from the exploitation of the settlers. Fakudze's message was not only geared towards uplifting the social and economic conditions of the living of his congregation but of everybody in the area. To this effect he invited whosoever identified himself with the common problems of the Swazi to attend demonstration lessons on his field.<sup>54</sup>

Masango was in charge of the demonstration work but even Fakudze had his schedule where he preached on economic development for the area through cotton cultivation and other crops, and these took the second place of importance to the production of maize.<sup>55</sup> He argued that labour migration to South Africa and sometimes even to local places of employment, such as the Asbestos Mines, which were opened in 1936, represented a waste of human resources and some misinvestment because the returns did not justify the amount of labour services invested and the inconveniences suffered.<sup>56</sup> Not only did labour migration lead to the neglect of cash crop production, whose profits could have been used to develop the area, but it also led to the constant

decline of output in food such as maize and other crops. His insistence on the latter, was meant to pacify chiefly opposition to his campaign on cotton production. In his own view, economic development assumed the improvement of the farming technology of the time along with the use of fertilizers which boosted the surplus generating capacity of the soil. Already the purchase of fertilizers was reported on a gradual rise by 1936.<sup>57</sup> Yet another important aspect of development, as he conceived of it, was the construction of well-built houses, which promoted the growth of a healthy nation. Only then could one talk of a developing nation. In the long run, the infrastructure could improve, and the communication could benefit from such a growth. He advocated the construction of a school, which he later built all by himself but to the benefit of the community in which he lived. He also struggled to raise money for building a health clinic but the latter did not come to fruition in his lifetime.<sup>58</sup>

Fakudze's timing for the demonstration lessons had been ideal since it occurred in the afternoon of Wednesdays when most people were relaxing. But in spite of the convenient time, the attendance was only apologetic. In the majority of cases the men who turned up were members of the church. The time Fakudze had chosen conflicted with the drinking sessions of the men. These demonstration lessons benefited even people from as far east as the foot of the Lubombo Mountain. This had been made possible by the Quarterly Meetings of the church. These meetings occurred in the second week of October, when cotton cultivation took place, and also in April when late spraying was also done. In order to avoid adverse effects on the farming activities of distant members these meetings lasted from Friday afternoon to Sunday noon, to enable those who had to travel long distances back to their homes to leave before dusk. It was during these meetings that the message to grow cotton was spread and the distribution of seeds to those who were interested to cultivate cotton. In this way, the forces which favoured cotton cultivation seemed too great to be successfully suppressed by those chiefs who disliked it.<sup>59</sup> Yet another variable which pushed these unprogressive chiefs into a tight corner was the fact that

Swazi cotton growers were among industrious cultivators who had mastered the methods of improved farming.

When the ECGC promoted cotton production in suitable areas, it also equipped growers with advanced farming methods which benefited the production of maize, sorghum, sweet potatoes and leguminous crops.<sup>60</sup> This applied technology, predated even the 1930s, but had been stepped up in the latter decade, through the use of fertilizers to raise the crop's capacity to produce more per acre than before. To this effect, demonstration plots had been intensified, along with the technical advice. The colonial state also stepped up the number of demonstrators to strike the balance between their number and that of the growers who needed technical advice to improve their farming economy. It is evident that the Swazi rural agricultural economy was gravitating towards a stage where it could neither be subsistence nor fully commercial. And this balance was maintained through to the end of the war in 1945.<sup>61</sup>

In spite of the division of Swazi growers' attention between food and cash crops, in 1937 their output in cotton was recorded separately from that of European settler farmers. In 1937, and 1938 Swazi growers were reported to have sold to the Power Company 11,250 lbs and 6,178 lbs seed cotton respectively, as opposed to 75,608 lbs and 13,964 lbs seed cotton sold by European counterparts. In that same period, coincidentally, Swazi output in tobacco was 13,525 lbs and 22,564 lbs valued at £267 and £445 respectively. That of the European producers was 187,776 lbs and 322,020 lbs valued at £3897 and £9181 respectively.<sup>62</sup> The nature of this development tells one that from the 1930s, when the cotton market was still maintained in Bremersdorp and that of tobacco at Goedgegun, some specialisation in the production of the crop most suited to the climatic conditions of each region took place. In a nutshell, it was more economical to grow cotton in Bremersdorp than in Goedgegun because the conditions were more suited to it in the former region, tobacco production in the latter. Yet another determining factor was the distribution of the markets that



promoted these crops.<sup>63</sup> In addition to these buyers were also some South African buses which operated in the country and provided transport to cotton to be marketed in Johannesburg.<sup>64</sup> As far as the availability of the facilities of marketing cotton were concerned, especially in Bremersdorp, cotton expansion could have easily taken place there if the profits justified the costs of production.

Tobacco was also grown in Bremersdorp but on a small scale due mainly to the remote market which made the costs heavy for the growers when considering its transportation costs to Goedegun. Its only alternative market was found among the Swazi who smoked it, but this form of market was far less lucrative compared to that which was provided by settler farmers, based in Goedegun.<sup>65</sup> Cotton production in the latter region was limited to a small scale by the mid and late 1930s, and this was due to the fact that the area was less suited to the crop when considering the climatic conditions along with the absence of a good market. A.E. Language and Company tried to kindle interest among the growers, but were unsuccessful. Sandleni and Ngololweni produced some, but the transportation costs limited the output to a minimum. The price offered by government, at 2 pence per lb of seed cotton even as late as 1938, did not provoke any reasonable interest for its cultivation.<sup>66</sup> As a result tobacco swung the conditions in its favour mainly because of the availability of the local market and the relative low costs of production. Itinerant European buyers provided more incentive because of the poor trade conditions offered by the cooperative. Swazi growers were discriminated against by the cooperative, which explains their decision to sell to itinerant buyers and at worst to government. Some growers made independent decisions on which crop to grow and where to sell it. There was also a burgeoning class of middlemen in the case of tobacco marketing. Bicycles are reported to have been used to transport tobacco to buyers in Goedegun and Hlathikhulu whose prices were higher than those offered by the government. Before these middlemen undertook the transportation of tobacco they had been apprenticed to some

South African dealers in hide and skin trade that had been carried out between Swaziland and Natal.<sup>67</sup>

Those involved in this business could not hide the problems of bicycle transportation of tobacco, especially on the rugged and steep parts of the roads. But it was the better of the two evils, that is, comparing portage and the bicycle, particularly on account of the long distance between the two places, Ngololweni which was approximately 85 kilometres away from Goedgegun where the European settler farmers were. Bicycle transport was reportedly similar to one they had seen in Durban when they sold skins there. However, the latter involved the pulling of a two-wheeled cart by one man, and this was in town which made all the difference.<sup>68</sup> On one of these trips, a participant, Luke Mangwe, met Language. Language wanted him to transport cotton from Ngololweni to Goedgegun.<sup>69</sup> A slightly improved means of transport was suggested; the use of donkeys to pull a cart loaded with cotton. It was a year before World War Two began that the venture relied upon mules which had been introduced as draught animals. From 1941, the transportation of cotton was made easier, but the money which brokers charged for the transport was too high for poor growers. While the price of seed cotton per lb was at 4 pence in 1940, the transport charge was 1 penny per 20 lbs of seed cotton, but when the growers complained that it was too high it was reduced to 1/2 penny, and that revived the cooperation between Language and the growers on the other hand.<sup>70</sup>

The discussion has delved into issues of an economic and political nature, in which the traditional role of chiefs in rural areas, and in the rural economy in particular, had featured very prominently. The mode by which chiefs had used their power to stamp out tendencies geared towards the commercialisation of the rural economy, particularly farming, was successfully destroyed by the ECGC which colluded very effectively with the Colonial State. But the collusion of the two forces which tamed the economic and political hegemony of the chiefs in the rural areas, was facilitated by the forces of the money economy that were

expanding very rapidly. The very system, lineage mode of production, which had assisted the capitalist mode of production to over-ride the pre-capitalist one, was to be sabotaged by the Colonial State whose support to the latter mode of production had been very faithful. The trojan horse of the plot for the down-fall of the lineage mode of production was none other than the ECGC together with other factors such as tobacco which assisted the market prices.

### NOTES

1. See J.A. Todd, " Twenty Five Years of Cotton Prices", in Empire Cotton Growing Review, vol. xv October, 1938, p. 278.
2. Sna Rcs 582/32 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, December, 31, 1933, p. 15; Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1930. p. 8.
3. See J.A. Todd, " Twenty Five Years of Cotton Prices", in Empire Cotton Growing Review, vol. xv October, 1938, p. 278.
4. Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1930, p. 8.
5. Ibid; Sna Rcs 582/32 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, December, 31, 1933. p. 15.
6. Sna Rcs 582/32 Notes of a Meeting held at Bremersdorp on the 15-7-1932 to discuss Cotton Growing by Natives; Rcs 697/33 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, December, 31st, 1933, p. 15.
7. Sna Rcs 582/32 H. Hutchinson to the Resident Commissioner, Bremersdorp on cotton growing, 5 January, 1932; interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 August, 1980.
8. Sna Rcs 42/30 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, July, 25, 1930; Alan Pim, 1932 op. cit. pp. 143-44.
9. Sna Rcs 582/32 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, August, 15, 1932, p. 16; Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1932, p. 15.
- 10 Sna Rcs 582/32 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, August, 15, 1932, p. 16; Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1932, p.36.

11. Sna Rcs 582/32 Hutchinson to Assistant Resident Commissioner, Manzini, on Native Cotton Growing, 9 May, 1932; interview G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 20 July, 1980.
12. Interview G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 20 July, 1980; S.B. Williams, Manzini, 20 July, 1980.
13. Sna Rcs 582/32 Hutchinson to Williams on Native Cotton Growing, 9 May, 1932; interview G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 20 July, 1980; B. Manana, Lwandle, 11 August, 1980.
14. Sna Rcs 697/33 Hutchinson to Williams on Native Cotton Growing and chiefs, 10 April, 1933; Rcs 837/34 Agricultural Officer on chiefs and Native Cotton Growing, 30 September, 1934.
15. Sna Rcs 837/34 Agricultural Demonstrator to Hutchinson on Native responses to cotton growing, 15 November, 1934.
16. Sna Rcs 582/32 Notes of a meeting held at Bremersdorp on the 15-7-1932, to discuss Cotton Growing by Natives; Rcs 837/34 Hutchinson reporting on the responses of the chiefs and progress in cotton growing to the Resident Assistant Commissioner, 11 May, 1934; interview S.B. Williams, Manzini, 20 July, 1980.
17. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 August, 1980; Logwaja Mamba, Ngudzeni, 5 November, 1980; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980; Sna Rcs 697/33 Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer to Lochrie on demonstration work, 21 August, 1932.
18. Sna Rcs 202/36 Hutchinson to Agricultural Officer on the question of markets other than the Swaziland Power Company for distant Swazi cotton growers, 11 May, 1935.
19. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 August, 1980; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980; Ida Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980; Madami Dlamini, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980; Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980; Alfred Mabuza, Mafutseni, 11 August, 1980. All these people were a living testimony to this view because they were alive then and involved in the cotton growing scheme.
20. Sna Rcs 697/33 Agricultural Demonstrator report on the pricing of cotton and Swazi reactions to the government price, 9 August, 1933; Rcs 582/32 J.V. Lochrie to the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on standard price for Native Cotton, July, 1932; Rcs 697/33 Records of the Finance Secretary, Power

Company, Bremersdorp, 12 November, 1940. Rcs 532/36 Records of the Finance Secretary, Power Company, 'Fixing of price for Native Cotton Growing', 15 June, 1936.

21. Interview Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 8 March, 1982; Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 8 March, 1982; while Tsabedze spoke on his experience as a participant then, Elaine responded to questions about her husband who was involved in the cultivation of cotton.

22. See also H. Kuper, The Uniform of Colour: A Study of White-Black Relationships in Swaziland, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1947), p. 57, gives a contrasting view by saying that the Swazi failed to produce enough to feed themselves; Also see Pim, 1932, op. cit. pp. 143-145, and he gives the different types of crops that were produced by this time by Swazi growers. Interview Kuka Mamba, Ngudzeni, 18 August, 1980; Nganga Mamba, Maloma, 18 August, 1980.

23. This statement is based on the fact that none among the old people who were interviewed accepted the fact that sweet potatoes were an alien crop just like maize. However, in the case of the latter, most of them were aware of the fact that maize was not indigenous, and suggested that it had come with some missionaries.

24. Sna Rcs 532/ 34 Hutchinson report on Native Cotton Growing, 3 December, 1934; Hutchinson, "Cotton in Swaziland", Empire Cotton Growing Review, xxx 111, (1956) p. 94.

25. Part of the lifestyle referred to here is that which involved the purchase of ploughs and other related equipment, the sending of children to school, all these and other acquired cultural traits needed money, and cotton had been used by some as a means to get the money. Sna Rcs 718/36 Memos of the Resident Assistant Commissioner, Bremersdorp, 27 July, 1936.

26. Sna Rcs 837/34 Memos of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, Bremersdorp, 24 May, 1934; Rcs 697/33 Hutchinson to the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, on the marketing of Swazi grown cotton, 8 May, 1933.

27. Sna Rcs 837/34 Agricultural Demonstrator to Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, 8 July, 1934, on the objectives for cotton cultivation even by Native priests.

28. Sna Rcs 837/34 Quarterly Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on cotton growing by Natives- the case of Samuel Fakudze, 7 September, 1934; interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 17 June, 1986, he confirmed this story since he was in touch with this development.
29. Sna Rcs 837/34 Memos of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on chiefs and their response to Cotton Growing by their subjects, 24 May, 1934.
30. Sna Rcs 837/34 Memos of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, 24 May, 1934. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1982; Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 26 March, 1983; both of them were interviewed on the experiences of the area, Macetsheni, and the importance and the manner in which the demonstration lessons were conducted.
31. Interview Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 June, 1986, on the responses of the people of Sandleni and the progress which resulted from the demonstration lessons. In fact, this was aimed at probing into the difficulties the texture of the soil posed to cotton cultivation. The soil did not appear to possess the potential to support a good crop; it was loose and sandy.
32. Interview Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 June, 1986; Mandla Dlamini, Sandleni, 16 June, 1986.
33. Interview Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 June, 1986; Mandla Dlamini, Sandleni, 16 June, 1986; Aaron Nxumalo, Ngololweni, 16 June, 1986.
34. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 16 June, 1986; Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 16 June, 1986; and 8 March, 1987; and this was confirmed by B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1986.
35. Sna Rcs 837/34 E.R.S. Cheales to the Government Secretary about the possibility of a licence to operate a cotton market in Goedgegun, 20 October, 1934.
36. Sna Rcs 532/36 Cheales to the Government Secretary about the possibility of opening up a cotton market in the Goedgegun area, 8 July, 1936; Rcs 202/36 Hutchinson to the Government Secretary on the problems of Native Cotton Growing and marketing, 11 August, 1934.
37. Sna Rcs 532/36 B.M. Manana to Hutchinson on the possibility of providing transport for cotton grown in the distant areas of

Shiselweni, 16 May, 1936; interview B.M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1986; Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986. The latter was a farm assistant to his uncle, Ephraim Dlamini, at the time of these developments, and is still alive.

38. Interview Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986; Pauline Mamba, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986.

39. Sna Rcs 316/37 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, Central and Southern districts, January, 1937, pp. 12-16.

40. Sna Rcs 316/37 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, Central and Southern districts, January, 1937, pp. 13-14.

41. Interview Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1982, his testimony was based on his uncle's experiences, though the informant believes that since the chief was a clown by nature, it is likely that he might have made the statement jokingly. However, since the study looks at the effects of what the chief said and did, that is what matters for this study and the effects it had on the cultivation of cotton. Interview Lufu Nhleko, Maloma, 27 November, 1987, on the allegations that they owned land and rented it out to those who did not have enough of it for cultivation.

42. Interview Lufu Nhleko, Maloma, 27 November, 1987.

43. Interview Lufu Nhleko, Maloma, 27 November, 1987; and Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986; Pauline Mamba, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986. The latter two were questioned on the allegations about the Mkhumane holding clan land, while the first one confirmed the allegations made about his clan land.

44. Interview Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986; Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1986.

45. Sna Rcs 532/36 J.L. Clark to Government Secretary 21 November, 1936, on the possibility of a gin in the Mafutseni area to gin cotton produced there.

46. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1986; Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986.

47. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 30 December, 1986, corroborated by Joshua Ngozo, Ngudzeni, 19 November, 1986.

48. Sna Rcs 532/36 Clark to Government Secretary, 21 November, 1936, application for a monopoly on cotton produced in the lowveld.
49. Sna Rcs 515/42 Report of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, December, 1939, p.10.
50. Sna Rcs 697/33 Hutchinson report on the progress in cotton cultivation in Bremersdorp: the case of Matsafeni in Mafutseni, 9 August, 1933.
51. Sna Rcs 697/33 Hutchinson report on the progress in cotton growing in Bremersdorp: the case of Matsafeni in Mafutseni, 9 November, 9 August, 1933.
52. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 December, 1982; Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 December, 1982; Sna Rcs 837/34 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on Native cotton growing, 31 December, 1934.
53. Sna Rcs 837/34 Hutchinson report on the effectiveness of some agricultural demonstrators on the cotton scheme in the central district, Bremersdorp, 19 July, 1934.
54. Interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 December, 1982; Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 December, 1982.
55. Sna Rcs 316/37 Hutchinson to the Resident Assistant Commissioner about the problems of cotton expansion in Swazi areas, 19 July, 1937; interview Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 December, 1982.
56. Sna Rcs 532/36 Report of the Agricultural Officer on the impact of alternative sources of income on cotton cultivation, 31 December, 1936; interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 December, 1982; Brian M. Manana, Lwandle, 11 December, 1982; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 7 December, 1980.
57. Sna Rcs 532/36 Report of the Agricultural Officer on improving Swazi agriculture, 31 December, 1936.
58. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 December, 1982; Albion Mafu, Bulungu, 10 August, 1987.
59. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 December, 1982; Albion Mafu, Bulungu, 10 August, 1987. The second was one of the members of the church which was under the leadership of Samuel Fakudze, and had been part of the demonstration work that was carried out on Fakudze's plot.



60. See Alan Pim, 1932, op. cit. p. 143-45; Hutchinson, (1956) op. cit. p. 94.
61. Sna Rcs 316/37 Hutchinson to the Resident Assistant Commissioner about the problems of cotton expansion in Swazi areas, 19 July, 1937; Hutchinson, 1956, op. cit. p. 93.
62. Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, December, 31st, 1939.
63. Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1942, on the marketing problems of native crops, December, 1942, p. 10.
64. Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1942, on the marketing problems of native crops, December, 1942, p. 15.
65. Sna File 1604 Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services report on native markets and the problems Natives faced with tobacco marketing, 11 May, 1940.
66. Sna Rcs 174/41 Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services report on the effect of the government price of 2 pence per lb of seed cotton on the crop's production, 19 August, 1941.
67. Interview Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 20 June 1986; Mavis Masuku, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Mary Gwebu, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986; Moses Lugogo, Ngololweni, 6 November, 1987.
68. Interview Moses Lugogo, Ngololweni, 13 February, 1982; Luke Mangwe, Tshedze, 14 February, 1982; Majaha Mavuso, Mbulungwane, 14 February, 1982
69. Sna Rcs 545/42 Memos of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1938, on the marketing of cotton and other agricultural produce, October, 1940.
70. Sna Rcs 545/42 Memos of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1942, on the marketing problems of Native crops, December, 1942, p. 10.

TABLE B.

THE TABLE SHOWS THE QUANTITY AND VALUE OF BOTH COTTON AND TOBACCO. IT ALSO SHOWS THE MARKET PRICE OF COTTON, THAT IS LIVERPOOL MIDDLING PRICE, 1931-39.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>COTTON</u>		Liverpool Middling (d)	Local Official (d)	<u>TOBACCO</u>	
	Output	Value			Output	Value
	(lbs) (000)	(£) (000)			(lbs) (000)	(£) (000)
1931	1532	10	6	2	298	9
1932	750	3	5	2	341	11
1933	207	1	6	2	378	10
1934	296	2	6	2	375	10
1935	200	1	7	2	262	7
1936	125	1	7	2	283	9
1937	87	-	7	2	188	6
1938	20	-	5	2	322	8
1939	9	-	-	4	401	10

Source: Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1931-36, for output, value and local official price.

: The year 1937 was given the output of 103,550 lbs seed cotton in the Colonial Reports but the Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, December, 31<sup>st</sup> 1938, gave 86,858 lbs seed cotton as the output for 1937. It was also in the latter year's report that the 1938 output was made.

: The Times of Swaziland, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1940. p. 5 gave the cotton output for 1939.

: J.A. Todd, "Twenty Five Years of Cotton Prices", Empire Cotton Growing Review, vol. xv October, 1938, p. 278.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## COTTON BECOMING KING: THE ADVANCE OF COTTON PRODUCTION AND OF SWAZI COTTON PRODUCERS, 1939-1960.

The post-war period ushered a flurry of economic projects all geared towards the rehabilitation of the slumped national economy. This situation created attractive grounds for the investment of some developed countries, and the regions to which capital was floated for investment were mainly found in the Third World, then colonies of the investors. While the colonial state appreciated investments in large plantations such as forestry, sugar cane and pineapple industries due to the fact that these created job opportunities for the colonies, it was also felt that an equally great responsibility lay in the development and stabilisation of the rural economy. In addition to the revival of erstwhile cash crops like cotton and tobacco, other additions were made and their production was reinforced through the expansion of the department of agriculture personnel, as well as the improvement of marketing and transportation facilities in Swaziland. However, the Swazi expanded the market for cash transactions by adding yet another dimension to it, that of barter trade which was popular among the producers themselves. In the long run, it was discovered that these trading activities had made the atmosphere, in the territory, conducive to the expansion of cash crops such as cotton and others. This fact was realised in the 1950s, when markets for cotton, distant as they were from production centres, became available, and created favourable conditions for the grower to consider it germane to invest in cotton more than in any other crop.

The impact of the Second World War, 1939-45

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, the emphasis of the Colonial State and the ECGC shifted from cotton production to that of maize as part of the War Economy. H.

Hutchinson, who had advocated and implemented the cultivation of cotton in Swazi areas with the help of Manana and J.V. Lochrie, another ECGC's officer in Swaziland, was transferred to go and manage the Food Production Scheme, whose centres were at Mafutseni in Manzini, Siteki in Lubombo and Goedegun in Shiselweni.<sup>1</sup> Manana went along with Hutchinson and left Lochrie behind, who as administrator of ECGC, did not have any impact on cotton production in Swazi areas until J.L. Moerdyk, then Agricultural Officer, assumed the duty to reintroduce cotton into Swazi areas in 1940.<sup>2</sup> This revival in the expansion of cotton was created by the demand particularly in Egypt where British combatants required cotton to make explosives.<sup>3</sup>

In 1940, when the demand for cotton soared so did the price which rose from 2d to 4d per lb of seed cotton. On the other hand cotton which was sold to the government instead of the brokers such as Messrs Kynocks and Company, Ltd., was purchased at 2d per lb of seed cotton. Kynocks paid 4d per lb of seed cotton. The company had its base in Cape Town, but purchased cotton in Swaziland through their agents who were positioned in the territory.<sup>4</sup> This price rise created an incentive for the growers to step up production which rose from the lowest output of 1,436 lbs in 1940 to 21,941 lbs in 1941. In both years the company purchased the crop at 4d per lb of seed cotton and shipped it to Egypt through East London in the Cape Province of South Africa. This improvement in the output was due to the efforts of the Agricultural Officer who worked with more than 10 demonstrators who taught improved methods of farming to the Swazi to step up production in cotton to meet the market demand.<sup>5</sup> But in 1942, even though the cotton output had been depressed by unfavourable weather conditions, the slumped price from the record of 4d per lb of seed cotton represented some 50% fall, to 2d per lb. This market slump had been engendered by the inundation of the market with inferior cotton from the Belgian Congo.<sup>6</sup>

The depression of the price from 4d to 2d per lb had an adverse effect on the morale of the producers. However, prior to

the price decline the colonial state, through Moerdyk, had expanded the production to Croydon, which lay close to the White Mbuluzi River, near present-day Dvokolwako Settlement, in 1941 where a government-run project was initiated to motivate Swazi growers there to cultivate cotton.<sup>7</sup> Moerdyk had received the cooperation of Lochrie, but most of the work was done by African demonstrators. It is important to note that at that time most of these efforts were concentrated around Manzini *per se*. The reasons for this conduct were simply that the demand for cotton as part of the War Effort, particularly from 1939, was treated as an emergency and the colonial state aimed to maximise output at a very low cost. In that wise, since the office and the base of the colonial state were in Manzini, it was cheap to concentrate within the latter region to cut down on any unnecessary costs such as those which could have been occasioned by the transport of both the personnel and the commodities. Yet another reason for leaving out the Hlathikhulu-Goedgegun area was the realisation that the region was less suited to cotton cultivation save for the yet unexplored and least known south east part of the region. But the historical cotton scene had indicated its relative unsuitability to cotton production by the war duration. This latter reason is emphasised by the fact that in spite of its remoteness from Manzini, then the seat of the colonial administration, Goedgegun was affected by the Food Production Scheme, and reasonable amounts of maize were raised there.<sup>8</sup>

It was in 1942, when the cotton price took a sharp nose-dive that yet another unfavourable event occurred and militated against the expansion of cotton cultivation: food shortages became acute and the colonial state shifted its emphasis yet again to the production of food crops chiefly maize to meet the rising demand. In short, even the Croydon cotton scheme was cut short by this intervention to the extent that very little cotton is said to have been produced in the following years. However, the cotton project was carried on at Mafutseni by some Swazi growers such as E. Nxumalo, D. Mkoko, and others alongside maize and other crops.<sup>9</sup> The main explanation for the persistence of these in spite of the intervention of the colonial state to reinforce the

production of food crops at the expense of cotton in Mafutseni was that Cotona's agents, operating through the South African buses which passed there, allegedly purchased the crop at 2d or even more by the early 1940s. They were still operating from their base in Johannesburg at that time. The colonial state justified its concentration on food production at the expense of cotton because the latter was already supplied in abundant amounts by the Belgian Congo.<sup>10</sup> In short, this episode introduced some kind of an 'international division of labour' by allowing each region to produce the commodity it was best suited to supply at that time.<sup>11</sup>

After 1942, when government's campaign to step up production in cotton by Swazi growers dwindled, the incentive to continue to grow the crop was provided by Clark who competed with Cotona.<sup>12</sup> According to Mafutseni cotton growers Cotona attracted more attention from them because they paid more money per lb for their cotton compared to Clark. However, whether this incentive provided by the brokers was strengthened by the War effort or by other factors, it was difficult to establish since both recorded and oral sources proved inadequate. But since the demand for cotton by the war had already been glutted with the supply of inferior cotton from the Belgian Congo, other factors should be held responsible for the revived but weak interest in the crop. It was in the 1920s, that Clark appeared in Swaziland in search for cotton to feed the BCGA and some newly built textile industries in Johannesburg, and it seems that both Cotona and Clark were the main suppliers of cotton to these houses. Even the few European settlers who had persisted with cotton production such as Captain G.L. Wallace of Dinedor, sold part of their cotton to the South African brokers while part of it was sold to the Power Company.<sup>13</sup> However, the output was low and that explains why the latter company stopped to gin Swaziland cotton and transferred to South Africa in 1945. It was also in the same year that the ECGC discontinued its cotton campaign in South Africa and Swaziland due to the small volume of trade in the commodity.<sup>14</sup>

It is hard to say whether or not the effects of the war were positive or negative on cotton production in Swaziland. It is important to note that the technology required to produce cotton had partly been reinforced by the war demand to the extent that when combined with experience, Swazi growers were able to use it effectively at the end of the war when the market price was revived. At the end of the war Swazi initiatives to produce cotton were reinforced by brokers who promoted cotton production.

### The Revived Market Price on Cotton and other Crops

At the end of World War Two, especially at the beginning of the 1950s, the agricultural policy of the colonial state, was to avoid supporting the production of one crop at the expense of others. Maize was one of the crops, whose production had not yet been stabilised throughout the country. The colonial state wanted the Swazi to raise production in it due to the simple technology, and low costs involved in its production compared to cotton. Secondly, when compared to sorghum, which did not require any special technology for production, maize was easier to grow because it was very light in labour. Unlike sorghum, which required guarding to ward off the birds which had caused depredation on it, maize did not need all this extra labour. The production of maize, in the place of sorghum, was considered one of the major labour and time saving devices, which freed labour and time for the execution of other economic activities. Yet another advantage of maize cultivation was that, unlike in the case of sorghum, whose production technology was very basic and simple, that of maize resembled that of cotton, where the use of implements like the plough, the harrow, the planter and the weeder were necessary.

Technological innovations made in food production were, in the long run found relevant to the production of other agricultural commodities, chief among which was cotton. In 1950 the colonial state, through the ministry of agriculture, began the implementation of economic programmes that were geared towards economic rehabilitation. The main incentive to publicise

stabilisation in maize was made necessary by the 1949-50 maize imports which were estimated at 25,000 bags in each of the two years.<sup>15</sup> But due to the low standard of living of the potential consumers measured in wages ranging from 9d per day for children to 1s 5d per day for adult males, very few could afford to buy enough of the maize. At this time, imported mealie meal sold at 44s 6d per bag of 180 lbs each.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the expenses incurred through food purchases, money was also spent on school education, on fiscal obligations and other things. Maize as a cash earner, did not provoke adequate stimulus for the production to go up among Swazi growers, instead the selling of labour to the mines in South Africa and other limited places of employment in the territory seemed to hold more prospects, hence the pull factor which these places of employment showed then.<sup>17</sup> But due to low wages earned either way, and the social inconveniences experienced, an alternative source of earning cash was devised and reinforced through cotton cultivation.

At this time the free distribution of cotton seeds was made, the objective of which was to whip up enthusiasm among the growers. The need to buy European manufactured goods in the 1950s, created an incentive to generate capital. This level of trade was owed mainly to the improvement of roads, both on national and regional levels. For most of the rural dwellers, money could be acquired through the cultivation of marketable crops. Of these crops cotton attracted more attention, though the output, especially in 1947 still did not indicate whether or not its cultivation would expand in due course. But it was not long before the interest indicated the direction the crop would take, as the statistics of production show, for instance, in 1947 the value of cotton was £330, in 1948 it had risen to £4,633, in 1949 it fell to £1,700 but made a phenomenal recovery in 1950, when the value was £24,688 with the output at 308 short tons of seed cotton.<sup>18</sup> Implicit in these figures was that the stimulus to produce cotton was complemented by the rising level of farming technology, by acquiring inputs such as equipment, and the skills. It was also at this time that the efforts of the agricultural demonstrators began to pay dividends. But these figures say very



little regarding the focus of the study, because the focus is the contribution of the Swazi and not that of the European settlers, and yet the figures reflect a gross national output. Even the availability of the gross national output had been reported as being due to the efforts of the European settlers, while Swazi growers were said not to have made any contribution. But the real story was that since the Swazi grower was still isolated from the market by lack of transport, his small production had been sold to the nearest settler farmers who registered the produce under their names. This historical distortion had started when cotton production was introduced into the territory.<sup>19</sup>

Cotton brokers such as Language whose base was in Goedgegun reinforced their trade by attracting more suppliers than before through providing them with subsidised transport to carry their cotton to the market. But since they were reluctant to indulge in the finance of cotton production in the area, their domain suffered some major limitations. It was this approach that made the administration refuse to grant them a monopoly to buy cotton in that area.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, the region remained a marginal cotton producer in the territory until 1953, when most of the cotton produced in the territory came from the low-lying areas of the Shiselweni district, but not from Goedgegun, rather it had come from south east Swaziland which since then became the cotton belt of the territory,<sup>21</sup> the rest of the crop had come from Bremersdorp. The Goedgegun cotton brokers remained isolated from the area even at this time because of its frugal policy which had restrained itself from setting up credit facilities to help finance the production of cotton. But yet another reason for south east Swaziland to have taken the lead in cotton production at this time was also the suitability of the area to cotton production in terms of the climate and the texture of the soil. It was dark brown loamy soil and was relatively fertile to support the crop without bother to rejuvenate it, at least in the initial stages of the business. Yet another added advantage was that the climatic conditions were more suitable than those of Goedgegun and Hlathikhulu whose climate was more temperate and less suited to cotton production.<sup>22</sup> Instead the last two areas were more suited

to the production of tobacco and not cotton, which suggests that both the establishment of the market there and the climatic conditions collectively favoured the production of the former crop and not the latter, a realisation of the early 1950s.<sup>23</sup>

When cotton output rose, so did that of the other marketable options, such as maize, ground nuts, sweet potatoes and beans. In 1953, for instance, maize production in Swazi areas in terms of acreage, was thought to have been 50% of the total area put under maize, while that of sorghum was thought to be 24%.<sup>24</sup> In the same year, the main export crops such as cotton, tobacco and maize, showed some revival of interest in the growers especially Swazi cultivators, and this was reflected in the output. The expansion of these crops, especially that of maize had been made possible by government provision of a local market. It was in 1953 that maize sold to government by Swazi producers was placed at 2,500 tons, and this was representative of some phenomenal rise from past production and sale. For instance, in the years 1951 and 1952, maize sold to government was 400 and 200 tons less than the 1953 sale respectively.<sup>25</sup> But the phenomenal rise in the sale of maize to government as reflected in 1953 was depressed in the following years and that was due to some more lucrative markets in the territory provided by some local trading stores who allowed the producers to use their maize as currency to buy commodities they wanted. In addition to these local stores there were also some itinerant buyers whose prices were more lucrative than those of the government. This trend was indicative of Swazi determination to avoid selling their commodities to less lucrative markets in the presence of those which offered better prices. What was also remarkable about Swazi trading activities was that they did not just exploit more profitable market opportunities but were aware of the most lucrative agricultural commodities of the different times, and responded by producing mainly those items which paid more dividends. In the process government endeavour to keep an up-to-date register of the produce was rendered futile. Apart from the above avenues of trade there was also the barter trade which took place between the Swazi themselves where they bartered



one item for another and this type of trade was not monitored by the government so as to keep a correct record of what was actually happening in the rural areas, as far as Swazi farming was concerned.

The barter trade flourished in Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun, where the climatic conditions had been suitable to maize cultivation, and growers exploited it successfully. On the other hand Hluthi, along with the cotton area, enjoyed very good fertile soils which supported all crops in a rainy season, but when rains were scarce only sorghum and cotton survived in it. From 1952 there were some Swazi who had moved from the temperate zones of Shiselweni such as Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun, to settle in the cotton area. Their objective, as cattle-keepers, was to multiply their livestock there because the area supported a very strong pastoral economy due to the availability of some nutritious grass. In this area the newcomers tried successfully to produce sorghum and sweet potatoes, but when cotton was introduced and offered an alternative means of earning money, and with the market close by, its cultivation was adopted, and some dwellers began to think in terms of which crop met their immediate needs, and especially those of a financial nature. Food was imported from the areas which lay to the north and produced more maize than cotton. Donkeys were used to move the food from the areas of high production to those which did not produce even enough to feed the local populations, and most of this maize was bartered for either goats or cattle.<sup>26</sup>

Barter trade was also common between goats and the plough, whose use was widespread throughout the country, and more so in the cotton growing areas. The lowveld provided a viable market for the ploughs which were sold by those people who had traded in hides and skins in Natal, and these ploughs had already been used, hence they were bartered for goats, and sometimes a dozen chickens each.<sup>27</sup> When plough purchases became cheap most cotton growers bought them in twos for security purposes. Ploughs at this point were viewed as one important area of investment because they could be hired out

either for cash or for labour or for some chickens. In cases where the person █████ rented out the equipment for more than one season the rental took the form of a beast. In this case ploughs became an instrument for generating income due to their labour saving █████<sup>CAPACITY</sup>.

### Cotton Expansion Into Swazi Areas

The history of cotton cultivation by Swazi growers of south east Swaziland bears some affinity to the experiences of Swazi cotton growers in 1911 and 1914, in that its beginnings are traced to settler farms. Here it had begun with tenant growers, and later it expanded to Swazi areas. In south east Swaziland, cotton had not been grown by Swazi cultivators until 1951 and Swazi pilot growers were tenants on Ian Hillary's farm.<sup>28</sup> At that time, Dick Fyfe was manager of the farm, and it was Fyfe who imported cotton seeds from Magudu, to promote cotton cultivation in Swaziland. Fyfe's first attempt to grow cotton was in 1949-50, and had done it on a small scale; as an experiment. When it proved to be suited to the ecology and climate, Fyfe expanded the area in 1950-51, from about 2 acres in the previous season to about 5 acres. He had been assisted by Albert Vilakati and Adrian Harrison in its production, and both Albert and Adrian were tenants on the farm. In 1951, Fyfe had harvested 4 bales of seed cotton of 400 lbs each, while the first output had been 1 1/2 bales, and both of these harvests were marketed at Magudu.<sup>29</sup> Though the two tenants did not know the exact price of the crop at the market, they were given the impression that it was handsome. It was the lucrativeness of the venture that motivated Albert to begin cotton cultivation in 1951, two years after Fyfe had been on it. Albert received Adrian's cooperation in this venture, and the output was 2 bags weighing 200 lbs each.<sup>30</sup> Since the same old problem of transport facilities still lingered, and very prominently in that area, the two growers decided to sell their cotton to the gin through Fyfe. The latter accepted the arrangement because he had even demoralised them by saying that non-European cotton growers were not allowed to sell directly to the gin due to the

enactment of racial laws in the country where the company was based, South Africa.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, the two growers were advised by Fyfe himself to sell their cotton through him. Grudgingly, the two growers gave in and allowed Fyfe to take their cotton to the market in 1952-53, but were very unhappy with the returns of their crop. In fact, the two growers were suspicious that Fyfe was bent on defrauding them by withholding part of their money. In the latter year their suspicions were made even stronger by the fact that Fyfe failed to explain to them the terms upon which the crop was sold at the market. Albert was even more suspicious than his colleague Adrian, because he had grown up in an area where cotton had been grown since 1904, and his family had partaken of the business in Mafutseni. As a result of his background, Albert was aware of the terms upon which the crop was supposed to be sold. The payments, for instance, were supposed to come in two parts: first, it was the on-the-spot payment and, second, the last payment which was supposed to reach the grower after the broker had sold to the manufacturers, perhaps double the price at which the broker had purchased the crop from its producer. In this case the producer was entitled to some percentage of the total amount, which was referred to as a back payment. The back payment had been kept dark to the growers by Fyfe with the hope that they would not have a way of knowing about it.<sup>32</sup>

Unlike the exploitation prone growers of the 1910s, Albert and Adrian resisted by exploring alternatives to the means by which they could sell their cotton to the market. Incidentally, there were four other Swazi growers in 1953-54, who also grew cotton in the region. Albert initiated a general meeting of the six cotton growers to seek an alternative way of selling their cotton to Magudu other than through Fyfe. By this time, there were two Xaba brothers (Peter and Joseph) in the area who owned a one-ton-truck which they used to transport kraal manure to their fields and to transport other agricultural commodities such as maize from the areas of high production to those of a low maize output.<sup>33</sup> The Xaba Brothers agreed to transport the cotton of the growers to the market at a charge which was acceptable to

the growers. It was in 1953 that the venture to sell directly to Magudu was made,<sup>34</sup> and it revealed the possibility of Swazi growers producing more cotton to sell to the company. The two growers who had accompanied the truck became ambassadors for the company in the region. And this cooperation resulted from the company's offer of a welcome party on the first day the growers went there to sell their crop. The two growers were Albert Vilakati and Lokhakhi Dlamini, chosen on the strength of their formal education which facilitated communication with the owners of the company. When the two returned to their colleagues, they dispelled the fears they had entertained about the alleged discrimination that the company practised. They invited their fellow growers to take up cotton cultivation and distributed cotton seeds to growers before this responsibility was taken up by the company's officer. They were assured that the ideology of the company was to promote cotton growing not just by one racial group of people but by every grower who possessed the ability to do so, and even if the financial ability was not there, the company were ready to provide it. In this way the company had succeeded to win the growers to its side and more growers were attracted to support the venture in due course. Upon the additional delivery of seeds which the company's field officer, Aaron Mhlongo, made at the beginning of the planting season, the company had hoped to monopolise cotton in the area.<sup>35</sup> The presence of Mhlongo in the region was important in so far as it reinforced the economic cooperation between the company and the growers. Mhlongo's presence was also an instrument by which the company could boost productivity in cotton in the area.

What was perhaps central to the nature of the development of Swazi cotton production at this juncture, was the success with which the company persuaded pilot growers to whip up interest in other growers to produce more cotton. This role was shouldered by Albert Vilakati, whose commitment to cotton production was above that of other growers. Albert was a teacher by profession and had been trained in South Africa. His exposure to the South African environment, where the history of political

agitation had long come of age by the 1940s, when he received his training, was to form some solid foundation upon which the history of cotton growers was built. Upon return from college he had taught in his neighbourhood (Mafutseni) but in 1948 was transferred to Nkutjini Primary School.<sup>36</sup> Due to lack of any form of accommodation on the school premises, Albert had sought it himself and found it on Ian Hillary's farm, within a walking distance. On the farm were other tenants, including Adrian Harrison who became close friends with Albert. Adrian was a Eurafrican. Hillary had discharged the managerial responsibilities of the farm to Dick Fyfe, yet another Eurafrican, whose roots were in Magudu, and had come to the region to seek social and economic asylum with his uncle, Hillary.<sup>37</sup>

In his second year of tenancy on the farm, Albert gained experience in cotton cultivation under Dick who had received seeds from Magudu and that is how the whole history of Swazi cotton production in this area began. It was due to his exposure to the social relations of European settlers and indigenous Africans in South Africa that made him sensitive to any form of racial and social discrimination. But after Albert and his colleagues had avoided Fyfe by selling directly to Magudu, he was sacked from the farm towards the end of 1953.<sup>38</sup> Though he had not been given any explanation for the dismissal, it was clear to everybody who knew the history of his involvement with cotton marketing, what occasioned his expulsion. Both he and Adrian, who had also sold his cotton to Magudu, were removed from the farm. It seems that owners of privately owned land allowed their tenants to reside on their farms so long as they accepted regulations for residence without any question. Recalcitrant elements had been eliminated, which conduct suggests that the system of tenancy was oppressive and exploitative at the same time.

However, the two were granted refuge by the chief of the neighbourhood, and their presence among the people in Swazi areas had an impact on the agricultural economy. By 1954 the number of cotton growers in the area had grown to twelve, and



all these were Swazi growers on Swazi Areas.<sup>39</sup> The local chief had warmly accepted the idea of an agricultural officer from Messrs Ralli Brothers and Company with a welcoming party partly financed by him, an indication that he supported the economic changes that were already underway in his region. The chief's receptive attitude to the company's venture was due to the fact that he had noticed that cotton appeared to be the main commodity farmers could grow to earn money to meet financial needs and even buy food in adverse seasons because the area was drought ridden.<sup>40</sup>

While the company had succeeded to inject interest among the growers of the region, it had not stimulated interest for the cultivation of cotton on a large scale. At least the problem of transport had ceased to be the arresting factor; rather the main problem was that the crop was labour intensive. South east Swaziland was the worst part of the territory in terms of isolation from the main centres of economic activity even by 1953, and even much later than that, which meant that the people of the area who did not see farming as an alternative means of earning money migrated to South Africa to seek employment either on the mines or local farms.<sup>41</sup> But some of those who did not grow cotton as a source of their livelihood, sold some of their livestock such as cattle, goats, pigs and sometimes chicken to raise the money. It was very rare in the region to find heads of families migrating to South Africa for employment. Those who migrated were mainly the youth who were pulled by some romantic ideas of having been to industrialised South Africa relative to their own home country or pushed by necessity. But even these youths did not go to the extent of relying on labour migration as a source of earning money for a living on an indefinite basis. Due to the racist and harsh treatment which they received there, they were forced to return home to find other alternative sources of earning a living.

But what needs more clarification is the reluctance with which heads of families reacted to earning a living by migrating to South Africa. South east Swaziland had a very thick vegetation,

and some small bushes which needed cutting down and to be uprooted when land clearing was done to facilitate the use of the plough to till the soil. These tasks required an enormous amount of time and energy, and the only time when they could be done was winter, after harvest.<sup>42</sup> Already, there was some conflict between migration to South Africa and land clearing in preparation for the next planting season, and ploughing required the physical presence of the family head to prosecute all the responsibilities of cultivating his fields. Women could not, and were not assigned these tasks, particularly because society was protective of such a sex on the grounds of physical weakness associated with it. In consequence of these handicaps, heads of families did not migrate especially in the 1950s when the cultivation of cotton was expanding. However, it is equally important to make some exceptions here because some men did migrate, and left their wives with all the tasks that were supposed to be performed by them.<sup>43</sup>

In most cases migrants constituted an infinitesimal proportion, and even then, migration was occasioned by some uncommon disasters on the agricultural economy. For instance, when droughts destroyed crops, some men migrated for a short time, simply to raise enough money for food and other financial needs. Livestock could have been sold instead, but some men had not found it easy to sell livestock before they explored other less self-destructive avenues of earning money. Yet another category of migrants among men came from those who despised the life of a farmer and chose to earn a living on wage labour. But since the region had initially attracted hard workers and venturesome Swazi cultivators and cattle-keepers, both of whom were bent on improving their social and economic standing, a class of leisure prone Swazi men was rare. It was these factors that discouraged labour migration on a large scale compared to the other regions of the territory.<sup>44</sup> But even in those regions which were prone to labour migration, the timing was very important, and was observed very closely. For instance, migrants always returned home in time to clear the fields and carry out farming. It was at the end of ploughing and planting that migration occurred, but

only when the season did not hold any prospects for a good crop would heads of families migrate leaving behind their wives to perform all the rest of the work, such as weeding and harvesting. But the results were always disappointing because the output would fall below even the domestic requirements of the family. The explanation had not been hard to find: whenever only one member of the family was left behind to shoulder the domestic tasks which included farming, looking after cattle, and others, there was always bound to be some shortcoming.

It is worth noting that after Swazi cultivators began to grow cotton as a source of income, they sought other related investment opportunities which were supportive of cotton production and vice versa. Such a practice was popular, and among those Swazi growers whose homes lay near rivers and damp places which facilitated irrigation farming, however small the extent might have been, maize and vegetables were grown. These were found along the Sitilo river, because at that time it enjoyed an adequately reasonable flow of water all the year round. Crops such as potatoes, sweet potatoes were also grown late in July and early August, just before the planting season began. A market for these crops and other vegetables was found at Hluthi, and these activities provided an alternative to cotton production whose scale was also expanding.<sup>45</sup> Some of these crops could even be sent to Goeddegun through Messrs. Xaba Brothers Transport, and the costs of transportation were not thought to be high, at least by the producers themselves. Winter was the main season when the production of alternative sources of income was undertaken.

It is also essential to note that cotton production in the late 1950s had not been thought of as the sole answer to economic problems. There were yet other alternative solutions to the shortage of money, and these were used in south east Swaziland until very recently, especially to the time when the production of other crops became very unpredictable. Those growers who persisted with cotton production, such as Albert Vilakati, Josiah Vilakati, Lokhakhi Dlamini,<sup>46</sup> and a few others, began to realise

some encouraging benefits. Though it was difficult to use one specific measurement rod to evaluate the profits of these people, the use of different criteria in the assessment of their economic growth was deemed necessary. For instance, while investment in modern and well-built houses might have been perceived a less profitable area for investment, the purchase of equipment to enhance cotton production in the long run and the upgrading of the other factors of production were thought to be relevant areas. The majority of these growers had moved from the use of donkeys to that of oxen (cattle), which meant that the plough became central to cultivation and so did draught power. There was a gradual shift away from complete reliance upon one plough per homestead to two ploughs plus the use of other related equipment. Those growers who had shunned cotton cultivation took a long time to acquire these improved technological factors of production, which had expanded by 1955.<sup>47</sup>

It seems Swazi cotton growers of the region became part of the market economy, particularly when one views the major advancements made by 1955. Having begun to upgrade the roads which linked the homesteads, that were already engaged in cotton cultivation, to the trunk roads which led both to the Phongolo and Gollel (Lavumisa) border posts, tractor acquisition was deemed the next logical stage. At this point, those who were averse to cotton production and hoped that the excitement with which the crop was adopted would die a natural death, were stunned by the major step taken by Samuel Nsibande and Amos Matse in 1955, when the two pooled their resources to purchase a second-hand tractor from a local European farmer.<sup>48</sup> Part of the wealth they invested in the tractor had been saved from their production of cotton while the other money had been raised through the sale of cattle. Much to the chagrin of ill-wishers, the two growers improved their farming technology by adding some of the relevant equipment that went along with the use of a tractor such as the plough, planter, weeder, harrow, but in a piecemeal manner. These two cultivators had been growing cotton already for three years. The impact of this development on those who had not taken cotton production seriously was that

they too began to view the cultivation of the crop differently than they had done previously. Among this group were those who had avoided cotton production in favour of earning money by hiring their labour to some European settler farmers, and the wages were earned by performing farm work, something they had despised in their own home area. This experience made some come to grips with reality and later returned home to start cotton production as a means to earn a livelihood, due to encouraging profits which accrued from it.<sup>49</sup>

In 1954 cotton production was already encouraging because about 9 bales had been produced by Lokhakhi Dlamini, followed very closely by Samuel Nsibande with 7 1/2 bales of seed cotton. However, the acreage of the growers was estimated between 10 and 8 acres respectively.<sup>50</sup> In general, the production was still low but encouraging when one considers that the lowest output per grower was 2 bales. The total number of bales which were sent to Magudu in 1954, was about 30 bales of seed cotton all produced only by Swazi cultivators.<sup>51</sup> It was due to this material progress that some new companies were attracted to the area to make investments in cotton production, for by this time the only company which had invested there were Ralli Brothers.<sup>52</sup> They had consolidated their economic empire in the region by sending one of their agricultural field officers, A. Mhlongo, to forestall any potential rivals. This field officer reported that Clark, whose base lay to the north, were expanding into the area (see above p. 61). But Clark were not a real threat to the economic empire of Ralli Brothers due to their failure to meet the credit needs of the growers, an effective weapon to win producers to a broker's side. As itinerant brokers, they had maintained their base in Mafutseni. A. Mhlongo, agricultural officer for Ralli Brothers and company, had remained cool about the expansion of Clark, until 1955 when the latter were seen engaged in purchasing cotton in Makhava, which lay some 8 kilometres to the north east of Matsanjeni. To this the Ralli group responded with haste and followed a policy of exclusion, in that they stepped up their involvement with cotton growers by taking a register of everybody who pledged to sell to them only and to no other

broker in the region. In addition to this, in 1956 they also set up a gin on the banks of the Mhlatuze River, west of present day St Philips Catholic Mission to buy and gin cotton grown in that area. In this way the company was trying to allay the transportation problems which they had associated with the growers' willingness to sell their cotton to Clark in 1955.<sup>53</sup> The company thought that the nearer the market the more concrete the need for cotton production would be. The company also stepped up the number of field officers to three in order to extend their economic control to almost every part of the area where there were promising cotton growers, not only Swazi but even European farmers were provided for in the arrangements.<sup>54</sup>

Ralli Brothers were so fearful of being out-shone by their rivals that they misjudged their economic budget. They appear to have over-estimated the potential of the area to produce cotton, particularly in relation with their financial commitments. The fact that the company made available facilities which involved the transport and inputs at what appeared to be reduced charges, is an indication that it had over-estimated its budget. At least the returns did not come anywhere near to meeting all those expenses, nor were the production figures promising to do so in any very near future, to improve the purse of the company. The most productive of the growers by 1956 sold 12 bales per producer and not more, while the majority, among the small growers, could produce only about 6 bales per season per grower. It seems the expenses of the company on cotton growing exceeded the returns and this might explain their unceremonious departure from the area and from the business in 1957. And it was at that juncture that Clark, who had practised some frugality in their expenditure, began to move in to take the place of Ralli Brothers. The change of the economic policy in 1959 was aimed to forestall Cotona agents who already operated from Nsoko and threatened to attract more producers.<sup>55</sup>

In their success to pull the brokers to their doorsteps, Swazi growers had not only solved their old problems which handicapped cotton production such as transport, there were

other benefits which were attached to the break-through. The state of the roads, for instance, not only trunk roads but even feeder ones, were upgraded by the brokers to ensure that the Swazi growers identified with them and regarded them as the most progressive brokers. In this way Ralli Brothers had hoped to sabotage whatever arrangements Clark had already made with the growers. Ralli Brothers had not seen Clark as a strong contender. Yet another pull factor which was used by the Ralli group was the distribution of inputs to the growers. The technical aspect which was taken up by the field officer, should not be seen in isolation from the social and powerful effect it had on the growers. The fact that he lived among the growers, shared their everyday production problems and helped the growers to solve them, was more effective in his attempts to create an atmosphere of a miniature family of cotton producers for the company. Social ties created therefrom were not easily severed, and in this way the company could relax and count its long term profits that would accrue from the investments made in the region. This illusion misled the company to include sorghum in its investments in agricultural farming.<sup>56</sup> However, sorghum did not appeal to those cotton growers whose cultivation had expanded because they argued that it was more labour intensive than cotton. The labour intensive aspect came in when the crop required to be guarded at fruiting time through to harvest to ward off birds and other animals like rodents which threatened it. While it was possible to execute these duties during the day, yet another problem was that most of the rodents which consumed the crop did so at night and not during the day, and that posed a problem which was very difficult to solve.

It is important to note that these economic changes were not peculiar to south east Swaziland alone, but wherever cotton cultivation was suited, there were responses, patchy as they were, both in the middle and the low velds. For instance, cotton cultivation had been attempted in 1954 at the foot of the Lubombo Mountain, in the Ngomane area and even to the north of that area, where the Simunye Sugar Plantations are found today.<sup>57</sup> Cotton production had been introduced there by

Malangwane Dlamini, yet another Zionist priest who had been inspired by an on-going cotton project of his senior priest Samuel Fakudze of Macetsheni (see above p. 72-75). He had also collected the cotton seeds from Fakudze on one of the Quarterly Meetings of the church. But Dlamini received the seeds in 1954, and began to grow the crop late in the year.<sup>58</sup> Even though Dlamini had not begun to grow cotton until 1954, his farming technology had long been improved by the acquisition of a tractor in 1947, when the Food Production Scheme was stopped. Malangwane had been one of Hutchinson's assistants on the government farms, and he was stationed at the Siteki farm until it closed down in 1947. It was at the end of this scheme that he was sold a tractor at £20 and he used it to produce maize there.<sup>59</sup>

Siteki had been isolated from the centres of economic activity to the extent that even the roads were very poor and certain parts of these roads were still impassable particularly by vehicles. The tractor had been used to transport most of the things that needed transportation between some areas, and in particular that of maize. However, in spite of the fact that Dlamini owned the tractor his farming did not make him any better than those who had not purchased one. He had depended on casual labour migration to South Africa instead of using farming as a means to earn a livelihood until he began to grow cotton in 1954. Maize had not yet commanded a good price but in the absence of a better option it could have been used as a cash earner instead of migrating to distant South Africa.<sup>60</sup>

The cotton market was far and remote from Siteki, to the extent that cotton growers could only sell their crop to the market at Magudu. However, there was a cotton broker in Mafutseni, south-west of his home.<sup>61</sup> Clark had expanded to the east of Mafutseni to establish themselves on the banks of the Mhlatuze River instead of eastwards to Siteki, and in 1955 they continued to expand to Makhava in the south east. However, Clark were thrown out of the area before the end of the same year when Ralli Brothers expanded there. Instead of concentrating on the improvement of the potential that existed in



Mafutseni, Clark expanded to areas whose cotton production was already attractive. In the absence of a nearby market, Dlamini travelled to Magudu to sell his cotton. However, before he had reached the destination he discovered that the Ralli group had already established a depot in Matsanjeni which lay on his way to Magudu. That was where he sold his cotton, but after he travelled more than 100 kilometres from his home to Matsanjeni. In 1956, however, Dlamini was relieved by the Ralli group who had opened up a ginnery on the banks of Mhlatuze River, (see sketch map) more than 65 kilometres to the south east of his home area, and that was where he sold his cotton in 1956.<sup>62</sup>

It is important to understand the main objective behind the determination of the Swazi growers to undertake long and expensive means of marketing cotton, when other options could have been used to substitute the capital intensive method. For instance, growers in the Siteki area could have found it reasonably cheaper to sell their cotton to the Barberton Cotton Cooperative, whose base lay south of the Mbuluzi River to the north of the producing area.<sup>63</sup> But due to the unprofitable price which had been offered by the cooperative, at a difference of one penny, growers had chosen to travel very long distances to sell at Magudu, which was a long distance from the producing area. This is undoubtedly one area where some growers displayed some distinct lack of economic planning in the history of cotton production.

However, like other growers, Dlamini argued that even though cotton production involved growers in huge expenses, with the improvement of the infrastructure, its production would be one of the lucrative enterprises. His convictions about cotton production becoming one of the lucrative ventures in the long run came true in 1959 when the Swazi contribution to the gross national product increased,<sup>64</sup> and this development was attributed to the availability of a local market which reduced the distance between the area of production and Magudu. In those areas where the market continued to be remote 'free transport'

had been provided for the transportation of the crop. The concept of 'free transport' and 'free seeds' was a catch phrase designed to attract the growers to the organisation which offered 'free transport', when in reality there was some ~~invisible~~<sup>invisible</sup> charge made on every grower who sold to the company. The strategy worked very well for the company, but its danger lay in the fact that the moment its objectives were revealed to the growers it would lose the control and reputation it had established between itself and customers.<sup>65</sup> However, there were many variables involved in the development of an amicable trade relationship between the two parties, and one that would prolong the cooperation to benefit both parties.

On the company's side these variables depended on the form and degree of success with which it cajoled the producers into a package that appeared remedial to their immediate problems, since to many growers, the endeavour to meet market demands was determined by prevalent financial stringents. These were of a fiscal and domestic nature. Second, as business people the focus of the package had to have long term plans and benefits, which meant that whatever sum of money was spent should provide for a recovery in the near future. This variable often carried with it some magnetic effect to tantalise the growers who were in cash needs, and that was effective for south east Swaziland at the time under consideration. Third, was the psychological variable which involved more than simply promising transport facilities to take the commodity to the market, the absence of which could have arrested progress. Since at this time there was a keen competition for Swazi cotton, Ralli Brothers used a method that made the growers hold them in high esteem relative to their rivals by making available most of the facilities required to produce the crop.<sup>66</sup> In this case the use of psychological means to arrest the attention of the growers was relied upon by the company. On the other hand growers also toyed with one major variable, which was the desperate desire for the crop the company indicated in a bid to outstrip its competitors and get rid of them from the area. Having hoodwinked their customers into building a miniature Ralli Brother family, the broker appeared

certain that it would recover the expenses incurred in its economic expansion and the exclusion of rivals.<sup>67</sup>

Apropos of these events, which swung the variables to the side of the company, was some counterbalance struck by the cotton growers, particularly in Matsanjeni, Sitilo and Hlushwana, under the guidance of Albert Vilakati. Whether or not it was a result of realising the long term adverse effect of allowing the company to dictate the terms of trade it is hard to tell, since the leader himself confessed that he had not foreseen any danger in consenting to every arrangement made by the brokers. Instead he had thought that growers should also make sure to benefit from the venture by drawing up their own operational strategies. However, what actually placed the broker in a tight corner was that cotton growers formed themselves into a cooperative which solved production and marketing obstacles in the region. They wanted to determine the extent to which cotton should be grown so that the output in food crops was not jeopardised. This was one of the concerns of the growers. But this objective was not acceptable to all growers because some of them had acquired some 'new factors' of production which facilitated a successful maintenance of the two economic worlds: food stability and the need to respond to the market demand. One of these factors was the tractorisation of the farming technology whose time and labour saving device worked in accordance with the elastic market demands for a diversified rural economy in post-war Swaziland.<sup>68</sup> Cooperatives and their effectiveness in cotton expansion in that region form a central theme for chapter seven; suffice it to mention that the organisation created some doubt to the company regarding the realisation of the ideals drawn out in their agenda for investment in south east Swaziland, and perhaps that says more about Ralli's decision to abandon cotton in 1957-58, in favour of other trades.<sup>69</sup>

#### South East Swaziland Becomes the Cotton Producer

Having made a return to the region that forms the central focus of the study, one realises the rapidity with which cotton

production had spread by 1956. The colonial state had taken cognizance of the progress of the rural agricultural economy, particularly the production of cotton in Swaziland, by the Swazi. While this gesture suggests some material progress achieved by Swazi growers in Swazi production, still there was no systematic way of keeping the production figures to ensure that Swazi cotton was recorded. In south east Swaziland, for example, the dominant consumer were Ralli Brothers who transported cotton from that area to South Africa. This was done in the absence of a government official to monitor the exported amount of seed cotton; indeed government sought figures of output from the broker and accepted whatever figure was given by the latter in good faith.<sup>70</sup> Markets that were under government control were shunned by the growers because they were unprofitable compared to those which were run by itinerant buyers in terms of the prices paid for the commodity. Yet again the colonial state did not seek means by which the interests of the growers could be protected against the exploitation of the brokers, an indication of negligence, and yet the cotton economy had been propounded and even reinforced by the state from the early 1950s. In the promulgation of cotton production the government aimed to rehabilitate the shattered and deteriorating rural economy, and this policy had made it necessary for the state to attach itself to the scheme. For instance, it began to distribute cotton seeds with the hope that growers would respond, but at the same time it failed to monitor the responses. The only interest government showed was that of extending technical advice through its demonstrators.<sup>71</sup> But even in this regard not many cotton producing areas were covered adequately, in fact some areas were only touched peripherally, like south east Swaziland.

In spite of the lack of technical education, the growers did well. Some of the pioneers in the venture had, by 1956, realised a high output in the crop. The highest output then was over 10 bales of seed cotton, which had been produced by Samuel Nsibande, who had purchased a tractor in the previous year, jointly with Amos Matse. But the latter had fallen far below the above record due to lack of labour, which had led to the

spoilation of the cotton on the fields, particularly before the bolls matured. The weeds which had not been removed soiled the lint and the result was that most of the crop was not baled for fear that it might bring disrepute to the name of the growers.<sup>72</sup> When one calculates the output per acre, the production was not impressive because each of them had planted the crop on an 8 acre plot. This means that the average production was 2 bales per acre, instead of the standard output of 5 bales per acre which became the average output by the 1960s in the same cotton producing region.<sup>73</sup> However, it is important to note that the experience involved in cotton production, which usually accumulates in due course, was still very low for such an output. For instance, these growers had not used chemical fertilizers in their fields, instead they had used kraal manure, yet crops like cotton, that were grown specifically for the market, had an insatiable appetite for chemical fertilizers, and there appears to be some strong in-built interdependence between the two. The interdependence is often reflected in the yield capacity of the crop when grown with these 'concealed factors of production' such as the chemical fertilizers. Third, the growers had not sprayed their cotton because they had not seen any cotton pests in the area, and yet at harvest time it transpired that some of the bolls had been attacked by pests and produced a very poor class of cotton. These factors of production needed to be constantly hammered into the growers' heads in the interest of progress.<sup>74</sup>

These prerequisites to cotton production could no longer be avoided in the absence of a variety that was independent of pest attacks. In fact, it seems the more the production of commodities expanded the more economic cooperation was forged between the multi-national corporations who handled the manufacture of fertilizers. The manner in which seeds depended on the amount and type of fertilizers used in production, raised suspicion because not every type of fertilizer could be used with any seed. Harvest aside, even the soils required the type of fertilizer that was suited to its texture and only then could the results be handsome.<sup>75</sup> Suffice to mention at this point that traditional factors of production such as kraal and compost manure were

quite important in the 1950s to rejuvenate the soil and raise the productive capacity, but these factors did not help to improve the output of the variety whether it was traditional or hybrid. Due to the low educational awareness of the producers, coupled with their weak purse, traditional factors of production formed the main backbone for cotton production and of the other crops such as maize. However, some growers even as early as the 1950s, had already begun to use some of these advanced means of production, and this step paid dividends.<sup>76</sup> As regards the spraying of the crop not many growers had taken it seriously until the early 1960s. But that oversight was to be regretted in the long run when it arrested the progress in the expansion of the crop. Expansion in terms of land was not necessarily correspondent with expansion in the output, particularly in 1958 at a time when the pest had become commonplace and had caused severe depredation on the cotton bolls.<sup>77</sup>

The Swazi farmer, being traditional in many respects, had retained the pre-capitalist form of production, and those who realised progress by 1956, were ostracised by their society. This attitude was initiated by the less prosperous members of the region and expressed through refusal to cooperate with progressive growers, particularly when communal labour was solicited to facilitate cotton production and that of other crops. The envious folks referred to their prosperous colleagues as 'Black Europeans', meaning that, though they were black Swazi indigenes, their life-style had been transformed into that of European settlers. The change was reflected in the improvement of the farming technology employed to expedite planting and expand the area each grower cultivated per season. The improvement of the standard of living was also reflected in the social differentiation of the community in the region.<sup>78</sup> Wealth was also expressed in livestock acquisition like goats and cattle. Tractors were hired out for the cultivation of cotton, transportation of the harvest of maize and cotton, and the transportation of kraal manure to the fields where cotton was cultivated. Those who failed to pay in cash for these services among the poor did so in livestock. In fact by 1958, there were 7

tractors altogether in the south east region owned by some Swazi growers.<sup>79</sup> Initially, those who hired the tractors complained about the charges as being too high, and that the owners of the tractors were exploiting them. In essence, this was an expression of jealousy for the prosperity of tractor owners. Social differentiation was also expressed in the social relations of the poor people towards the prosperous through the strained and recoiling relationship.

During 1958 and 1959, hired labour was gradually becoming a feature of the rural economy. But the shift away from reliance on family and communal labour was very gradual, to the extent that even as late as the 1980s, communal and family labour were complementary to hired labour even among the already rich entrepreneurs.<sup>80</sup> Part of the explanation is derived from the culture of the people, not only of south east Swaziland, but of the country in general. Since most of the members of the communal labour force were members of the extended family, payment in cash was frowned upon, because it was an indication of the severance of the social ties that held the unit together. Extended family members had viewed themselves as part of the whole social family fabric and were willingly ready to make available their labour services to any member who required it much in the same way as they, in turn, fell back on any able member of the extended family for support in financially bad times.<sup>81</sup> However, in spite of this social handicap to the acquisition of labour by exchange means, in 1958, within the cotton producing area, children of school going age, whose parents could not afford to pay for them to go to school, found employment with the prospering Swazi cotton growers. That phenomenon was undoubtedly crucial to the development of the region in the improvement of the infrastructure which facilitated the transportation of the labour power. By its nature, school child labour was only casual and became available when schools were in recess, otherwise they worked on the cotton fields on weekends and public holidays. The impact of this labour was, however, minimal to facilitate cotton expansion. Most of the children who provided the casual labour often walked about 15

and 25 kilometres to and from the cotton fields. These long distances had an exhaustive effect on the performance of the children, apart from the fact that as children, they required to be constantly supervised. Supervision was meant to stop them from playing and to ensure that they did not uproot the crop, and mixed it up with the debris at harvest time. Both of these things were the concern of the cotton growers, and the allegation was that lack of constant supervision of child labour to minimise this conduct resulted in the quality of the crop being affected adversely. Whenever weeding was done, particularly at fruiting time, many bolls were pruned from the bushes, thereby reducing the potential output. But since child labour was the only form of labour that was available, growers had to employ it.<sup>82</sup> Other growers depended mainly on family labour, and restricted their acreage to a manageable limit. The argument was that child labour was uneconomic in the sense that is explained above, because the supervisor of child labour concentrated his energy on that aspect of work, and contributed little manual labour himself, which was representative of some major loss in the production process.<sup>83</sup>

But notwithstanding all these problems, it cannot be denied that cotton cultivation owed its development and sustenance in part to child labour. Beyond that was the labour provided by women, a common feature of the development of cotton cultivation since it had been introduced into Swaziland in 1904.<sup>84</sup> Both the European settler cotton plantations and Swazi cotton production were dependent on child labour, and the 1950s were no exception. Some of these children had built up some immense experience in cotton weeding and picking that supervision was sometimes made necessary only by the suspicions of the employers, and not that child labour was a drawback in the production of the crop. Even from 1955, when cotton production picked up once more in Swaziland the employment of child labour had remained central to it.<sup>85</sup> If child labour had been destructive to cotton production, the cotton economy could not have made the strong come back which the



country experienced from 1955 to 1959, as the three tables, on production, price levels and quality, indicate below.

TABLE 1: COTTON OUTPUT, VALUE and PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SWAZI EXPORTS (BY VALUE).

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OUTPUT</u> (S. Tons)	<u>VALUE</u> (£)	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
1955	2,600	223,000	76.3
1956	2,650	199,000	77.0
1957	3,212	227,392	79.6
1958	2,635	178,027	56.7
1959	4,936	298,233	38.2

SOURCE: Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1955, p. 74; 1956, p. 80; 1957, p. 78; 1958; p. 82; and 1959. p. 36; and these figures represent the output and the value. The figures of the percentages are based on those found in J.B. McI. Daniel, The Geography of The Rural Economy of Swaziland, Durban: University of Natal, Institute of Social Research, 1962, p. 241.

TABLE 2: NOMINAL COTTON PRICES Per lb of SEED COTTON

1956	8.08 d	"	"	"
1957	8.15 "	"	"	"
1958	8.12 "	"	"	"
1959	7.26 "	"	"	"

SOURCE: Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1959, p. 36.

TABLE3: COTTON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT- PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CROP THAT WAS OF GRADE 1 QUALITY.

1956	67%
1957	69%
1958	61%
1959	74%

SOURCE: Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1959, p. 36.

The impact of the boll worm was clearly reflected in the output, value, and quality, as shown in tables 1, 2, and 3, above. The drop in the percentage, representing the crop's contribution on a national level compared to other crops, was not necessarily caused by the decline in the quality, rather it was brought about by the impact sugar cane made in that year on the agricultural sector. In spite of making its first debut, sugar cane gave a 17.4% contribution to the gross national product in terms of revenue in 1958, and went on to upset the table by making a 54.2% in 1959, and became the leading crop. However, cotton continued to hold on to the second place with 38.2%. What is important to note here is the impact the poor quality of the crop in 1958 had on the price of cotton in 1959. The price per lb of seed cotton took a nose dive from 8.12 pence in 1958 to 7.26 pence in 1959, in spite of a good cotton output. It was in 1959, a year after Clark had taken a lead in buying cotton in the region that Swaziland realised the highest output since the history of the crop began.<sup>86</sup> It would, however, be dangerous to attribute this phenomenal improvement to the latter company, because when one looks back to the earlier years, the trend was steadily upward and had continued in that order. The most relevant observation is that in 1959, Swazi cotton contribution was still small and was estimated in the region of 20%<sup>87</sup> and this did not include the crop sold to settler farmers instead it represents that which was sold to the government or to Clark. Most of Swazi cotton had come from south east Swaziland, where the number of Swazi cotton growers, who already owned tractors, had increased from two in 1955 to twelve in 1959.<sup>88</sup>

The other crops such as tobacco and maize, which had competed effectively with cotton from the immediate post war era, had declined by 1959, as shown in Table C. In 1946, tobacco was reported as the only crop worth recording among the export commodities, but in 1959, its contribution on a gross national level, was placed at 7.5% compared to 38.2% cotton. Maize was weaker since in that year alone there were 55,471 bags of 200 lbs each imported from South Africa to offset a food deficit. In

that same year, the Swaziland Milling Company, which had been granted the monopoly in 1958 but only began to operate in 1959 to buy and sell locally grown and imported maize and maize products in Swaziland, purchased 42,452 bags of locally grown maize.<sup>89</sup> But this figure does not tell the whole story surrounding maize output in the territory because some of the growers sold their maize to other more profitable markets such as trading stores, or even bartered it for cattle with other Swazi growers whose output had been drastically reduced by adverse climatic conditions. Another variable which stopped Swazi growers from selling to the company ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> the unencouraging price of 30s per bag of 200 lbs which the company offered. Growers who sold to the company were those who needed cash, while those who sold maize due to lack of storage facilities chose to barter it for some livestock.<sup>90</sup> However, whatever the case may be, produce in maize had fallen relative to that of cotton, particularly in cotton producing areas, where growers no longer bothered to produce a maize surplus but just adequate for domestic consumption. To these growers, maize was no longer central to their agricultural economy the way it had been prior to the revival of cotton and also to the appearance of brokers who did not only solve the market problem but even that of credit facilities.

Tobacco could not compete either, particularly in the years 1954 to 1959, when its percentage fell to 10.6%, 6.4%, 7.2%, 11.0%, 19.9% and 7.5% compared to the cotton percentage of 56.3%, 76.3%, 77.0%, 79.6%, 56.7% and 38.2% in the respective years.<sup>91</sup> The reasons are not hard to find for this trend. The Tobacco Cooperative, had practised discrimination in their treatment of non-European customers which thing disadvantaged Swazi growers, and even involved them in major losses when their crop was refused on various grounds. In either way one looks at the tobacco market, it was demoralising to the Swazi producer, hence when cotton brokers appeared and extended their receptive attitude, the Swazi responded promptly in the post war era. Sometimes cotton was produced in very distant areas, whose transportation to the market became a demoralising experience, but in spite of those problems it continued to expand

until 1959, when Clark arranged to alleviate these problems, partially though.<sup>92</sup> In this way cotton became the common and down-trodden man's economic redeemer.

The Swazi did not grow other crops such as groundnuts on a large scale as shown in Table C. (2), but grew it on a small scale because the crop was less profitable compared to cotton, second, the market was not as reliable and consistent as the cotton one. Yet even the European growers who had grown it stopped in 1962 basically for the reasons that it was no longer as profitable as other crops like cotton and sugar cane. The table also reflects tung nuts, which had been grown as a plantation crop by large scale undertakers, and its market was based in South Africa. Its history was, however, short-lived, first because of the long time it took to mature, second, it was more vulnerable to diseases than any of the other crops, and as a result it was abandoned by the end of the 1950s.

When one views Table C. (2), it becomes clear that at the end of the war there was very little cash crop production especially in Swazi areas, except tobacco. However, in 1947, with the world market price of cotton revived, cotton production was resuscitated, and it rose only to be slightly affected in 1949 when the planting season began rather too late due to late rainfalls and it was also affected by hailstorm which destroyed some of it. But after that it recovered, particularly from 1952 when even Swazi production was expanding. The only year in which there was a sharp drop relative to the other years was 1958, a decline in output which affected the value even for 1959, when the price per lb of seed cotton dropped as indicated in Table 2 on cotton prices for the years 1956-59. However, that drop, which was worsened by the attack of the boll worm was shortlived since in the next year the quality of the crop improved and even the output was handsome, thanks to the work of the research station that had been established at the Malkerns valley in 1958 under the auspices of the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Production in cotton continued to improve as indicated in the output and value figures of the years that followed. The

importance of the crop to the development of the nation speaks for itself as shown in Table C(1) of the percentages of production and revenue contribution to the state. Its dominance was only disturbed by the introduction of sugar cane, a plantation commodity financed by multi-nationals, like the Colonial Development Corporation from 1958, but cotton, which became the down-trodden men's commodity, continued to dominate the second position.

Cotton expansion in the 1950s, was facilitated by the construction of roads to the extent that by 1959, virtually every part of the territory had a reasonably good surface road for trucks. While the transportation of cotton was dependent upon such an infrastructure, so did that of the agricultural demonstrators who spread the technical knowledge central to cotton production. In the period before World War Two, the diffusion of knowledge was poor owing to the poverty of the infrastructure. In 1958, the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund financed the construction of a research station at Malkerns, whose functioning had begun at the end of that year. Research could be done in Swaziland along with laboratory work, and these facilities helped to ease the problems of pest attack the farming sector had suffered for years. But these facilities took rather too long to diffuse to Swazi areas,<sup>93</sup> a gap which was filled by Clark in the case of cotton. Roads are also thought to have been an arresting factor.

In conclusion, the study has shown the extent of the impact of the Second World War on the production of cotton in Swaziland, whose importance had declined very drastically since the World Slump of 1929-31. The revived interest in the crop also led to the provision of not only marketing facilities but even the credit facilities were made available and that in itself was enough to revive the already dead and forgotten, yet very crucial investment area for a state whose economy was export oriented, such as Swaziland. The following sections of the study show the various investment areas which were perceived by the growers

and exploited to the growers' benefit, as well as that of the community in which they lived.

It is now time to turn attention to an analysis of some of the main factors in the development of cotton growing among the Swazi and the later period: the use of cattle as capital to finance cotton cultivation, the emergence of cotton cultivating entrepreneurs and the role of cotton cooperatives in the development of cotton cultivation overlap to the end of the thesis.

### NOTES

1. Sna Rcs 358/39 Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer, Food Production, 31 December, 1939.
2. Sna Rcs 462/40 Report of Jan L. Moerdyk on Cotton Production in Swazi Areas, 31 December, 1940; File 479 Memo of the Agricultural Officer on cotton cultivation in Swazi Areas, 20 July, 1940.
3. Sna Rcs 224/41 Kilby to Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 16 June, 1941.
4. Sna Rcs 515/42 Kilby to Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 16 June, 1942; Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of the Agricultural Officer on Swazi Agricultural Services, 31 December, 1942.
5. Hutchinson, "Cotton in Swaziland", Empire Cotton Growing Review, xxx111 (1956) p. 94.
6. Sna Rcs 216/41 Report of Agricultural Officer on Swazi Agricultural Production, 13 August, 1941.
7. Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of Agricultural Officer on Swazi Agricultural Production, 31 December, 1942; interview Alfred Mabuza, Mafutseni, 31 July, 1980.
8. Sna File 479 Memos of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on Food Production, 31 December, 1940.
9. Interview Alfred Mabuza, Mafutseni, 31 July, 1980; Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 11 September, 1980; Madami Dlamini,

Mafutseni, 11 September, 1980; Brian Manana, Lwandle, 11 September, 1980.

10. Interview Benard Shongwe, Mafutseni, 20 September, 1980; Alpheus Maziya, Mafutseni, 20 September, 1980; Madliza Nkambule, Kwabhudla, 22 September, 1980.

11. The idea is expressed by Bill Warren, Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism (London: Verso Press, 1980) pp. 143-157.

12. Sna Rcs 545/42 Report of the Agricultural Officer Swazi cotton cultivation, 7 August, 1942.

13. Interview S.B. Williams, Manzini, 25 July, 1980; J.D. Scot, Luve, 15 August, 1980; G.L. Wallace, Luve, 15 August, 1980.

14. H. Hutchinson, 1956, op. cit. p. 93.

15. Sna Box 50 File 52/3 Swaziland Milling Company Correspondence to Government Secretary on local markets for maize to boost production to offset the deficit, 15 June, 1958.

16. Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1955, p. 7. contained cost of living relative to standard of living, the latter based on the wages of the males on local farms.

17. Sna Box 65 File 8 1/2 Department of Land Utilisation report on Native Recruiting Corporation, 3 November, 1953.

18. These figures were released in the Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, for the years 1948 to 1950 respectively, but these figures gave no indication as to the level of African contribution, 1948, p. 32; 1949, p. 21; 1950, p. 26.

19. Sna Box 68 File 89 Markets and Marketing, general report of the Director of Livestock and Agricultural Services, 9 July, 1958, marketing of cotton. Reference to ginnery on Mhlatuze River bank.

20. Sna File 3172b Government Secretary to Language on monopoly of cotton in Shiselweni, 23 February, 1953.

21. Sna File 3172/23 Director of Land Utilisation to Lovett on cotton production and marketing in south east Swaziland, 25 June, 1956.

22. Sna File 3172b Circular 832/54, Director of Land Utilisation on regional suitability to cotton and tobacco production, 7 September, 1954.

23. Sna File 3172b Circular 832/54 Director of Land Utilisation, on regional suitability to the production of cotton and tobacco, 7 September, 1954.
24. Sna Box 75 File 104 Report of the Agricultural Department on seed distribution, maize and sorghum, 10 November, 1953.
25. Sna Box 75 File 104 Report of the Department of Agriculture on the sale of Swazi maize to government, 18 August, 1952.
26. Sna Box 68 File 89 Report of the Agricultural Officer, Goedgegun, on alternative markets for Swazi grown maize, 10 July, 1953. Interview Ndawonye Sikhondze, Lulakeni, 19 December, 1982; Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 19 December, 1982, corroborated these reports.
27. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 December, 1982; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 December, 1982; Aaron Jele, Makhava, 19 December, 1982; Samson Sikhosana, Makhava, 19 December, 1982.
28. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 20 October, 1980, 8 January, 1988; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; and Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980, confirmed that Albert pioneered cotton cultivation but failed to make progress.
29. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980, 8 January, 1988; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; and David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980. All involved in cotton cultivation by 1953, the two lived very close to Hillary's farm to have noticed what was actually happening.
30. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; and Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980, supported the statements made by his cousin, Albert Vilakati.
31. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
32. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; and David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980.



33. Interview Joseph Sihlongonyane, Mgamudze, 23 October, 1980; Alpheus Kunene, Nsalitje, 23 October, 1980; Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 23 October, 1980; Simon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 23 October, 1980.
34. Interview Moses Xaba, Sitilo, 23 October, 1980; Bernard Dlamini, Sitilo, 23 October, 1980; Fendru Xaba, Sitilo, 23 October, 1980; Albert Sitsebe, Nsalitje, 23 October, 1980; and Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 23 October, 1980.
35. Sna Box 98 File 145 Director of Land Utilisation to Lovett on their agricultural officer and farmers in south east Swaziland, 20 August, 1954.
36. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; corroborated by Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980.
37. Interview Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 27 March, 1982; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 27 March, 1982; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 27 March, 1982; and David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 27 March, 1987.
38. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Elphas Shiba, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Jele, Matsanjeni, 28 May, 1982; and Luke Masuku, Mgamudze, 28 May, 1982.
39. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Mhhubulwana Matse, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; Abel Mngomezulu, Nsalitje, 17 October, 1984; Sna Box 98 File 145 Lovett to Director of Land Utilisation on Swazi growers and cotton cultivation, 12 November, 1954.
40. Sna Box 98 File 145 Lovett to Director of the Department of Land Utilisation on the response of the Swazi growers to cotton cultivation in south east Swazialnd, 12 November, 1954.
41. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; James Vilakati, Makhava, 20 October, 1980; Sna Box 65 File 8 1/2 Department of Land Utilisation report on the effects of the Native Recruiting Corporation on farming, 3 November, 1953.
42. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni,

20 October, 1980; and the view was expressed virtually by all growers committed to cotton cultivation.

43. Sna Box 65 File 8 1/2 Department of Land Utilisation report on the Native Labour Recruiting Corporation and the 1952 figure of migrants to South Africa was 7,469, compared to 7,363 in 1951, 3 November, 1953.

44. While it was not possible to get the exact figures of heads of families who had once migrated from the region, particularly those who were engaged in cotton cultivation, there were about three who were believed to have done so in the past, and were lazy growers because their families suffered food shortages even when the season was fair. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980

45. Interview Petros Dlodlu, Mlindazwe, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 11 June, 1983; Sna Box 117 File vcf1/8k Report of the Development Committee on rural agricultural development, 9 July, 1953.

46. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; and Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; see T.W. Schultz, Transforming Traditional Agriculture, (New York: Arno Press, Reprint, 1976) p. 135.

47. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albion Matse, Sitilo, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980, and this was made necessary by the diversified economy, along with the frequent breakdown of the equipment on the pathway.

48. Interview Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 21 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 21 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 16 November, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 16 November, 1980.

49. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; he alleged that he was such a returnee, and had concentrated on cotton production and other businesses.

50. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande,

- Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; and Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
51. Sna Box 16 File 18/1 Cotton: Marketing and movement, Report of Lovett contained cotton growing in Matsanjeni-Sitilo area, 19 August, 1955.
52. Sna Box 98 File 145 Lovett to Director of Land Utilisation on Swazi cotton in south east Swaziland, 12 November, 1954.
53. Sna File 3172b Lovett to Government Secretary on licence to monopolise cotton purchases, 9 September, 1956.
54. Interview Ida Dlamini, Nkutjini, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Simelane, Mgamudze, 29 October, 1980; Elliot Masuku, Mgamudze, 29 October, 1980; Josiah Masuku, Mgamudze, 29 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
55. Sna Box 68 File 98 Lovett to Clark on the latter's purchase of Ralli investments, 3 March, 1958; Sna Box 68 File 89 Report of Agricultural Officer on Clark and cotton growing in the lowveld, 9 November, 1959.
56. Sna File 3172b Lovett report on the expansion of their market for Swazi produced cotton, 9 September, 1956.
57. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 September, 1984; Almon Ngcamphalala, Phonjwane, 11 September, 1984.
58. Interview L. Zini, Extension Agricultural Officer, Nhlangano, 30 July, 1980; Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 September, 1984.
59. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 September, 1984; Sna File 3172b Report of the Agricultural Officer on the progress of Swazi growers in cotton production, 9 November, 1954.
60. Sna Box 65 File 8 1/2 Department of Land Utilisation report on migration, the case of the Native Labour Recruiting Corporation, 2 March, 1955; Box 62 File 71/2 Department of Agriculture report on maize production and Swazi grower avoidance of government markets, 16 August, 1955.
61. Interview Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 11 September, 1984; L. Zini, Nhlangano, 30 July, 1980.
62. Sna File 3172b Hutchinson report on the problems of cotton marketing for Swazi growers distant from Magudu and Mhlatazu River bank, 11 August, 1956. Interview P.W. Meyer, who was one

of the local directors of the ginnery, Mhlatuze River Bank (at the spot of the ginnery and its remains are still there) 20 October, 1980.

63. Sna File 3172b Hutchinson to Barberton Cooperative Union on cotton purchases in Komati River area neighbouring areas, 8 May, 1956.

64. Sna Box 68 File 89 Market and Marketing: Agricultural Officer report on the effect of Ralli Brothers on cotton production in the region, 29 July, 1959.

65. At least Ralli Brothers had succeeded in under-selling Clark in 1955 and 1956, but in 1957 they quit and concentrated on other businesses in South Africa, and Clark moved in Sna Box 68 File 89 Clark to Agricultural Officer on the positive responses of cotton growers in south east Swaziland, 10 January, 1958.

66. Sna Box 68 File 89 Hutchinson to Clark about creating credit facilities for the cotton growers where Ralli Brothers operated, 7 September, 1958.

67. Sna Box 68 File 98 Agricultural Officer to Clark on promoting cotton cultivation, 27 November, 1957.

68. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; and Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; expressed the feeling that Albert Vilakati dictated to them on how they should run their affairs.

69. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; 21 August, 1987; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 26 November, 1986, confirmed that Ralli Brothers left trade in cotton in 1957, but in the records, it is stated that the company left in 1958: Sna Box 68 File 98 Lovett to Clark on the possibility of the latter buying the investments of the Ralli group, 3 March, 1958.

70. Sna File 3172b Lovett to Government Secretary on cotton delivered at the ginnery by Swazi growers, 5 August, 1956.

71. Sna File 3172b Agricultural Officer to Government Secretary on impact of agricultural demonstrators on the improvement of Swazi farming, 16 July, 1958.

72. Interview Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 25 May, 1985; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 16 November, 1985; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 28 December, 1986.
73. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 June, 1986; being the most productive farmers, alleged that 5 bales per acre by 1969 was the average cotton output.
74. Interview Agricultural Demonstrator, Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze, 19 June, 1986.
75. T.W. Schultz, 1976. op cit p. 135. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze, 19 June, 1986; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 27 September, 1986.
76. T.W. Schultz, op cit p. 135. It was in 1958 that some Swazi cotton growers began to use chemical fertilizers to grow cotton and these were Samuel Nsibande, Lokhakhi Dlamini, and Amos Matse. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; and Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
77. This information was contained in the Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1959, p. 36.
78. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 28 December, 1986.
79. Interview Almon Sihlongonyane, Nsalitje, 29 December, 1982; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 11 March, 1983; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 11 March, 1983; Sna 3172b Report of the Director of Land Utilisation on Swazi cotton growing in the southern district, 26 August, 1959.
80. Interview tycoons of the area, Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 August, 1984; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 26 August, 1987; Sna 3172b Report of the Director of Land Utilisation on Swazi cotton growing in the southern district, 26 August, 1959.
81. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 August, 1984; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 26 August, 1987.
82. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 August, 1984; Johannes Nkwanyana,

Lavumisa, 26 August, 1987, but they still employ children due to labour shortages.

83. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 August, 1984; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 26 August, 1987.

84. Sna Rcs 285/09 Report of A.M. Miller, Swaziland Corporation, London, 1904, p. 25.

85. Sna File 3172b Lovett to Director of Land Utilisation on labour and the cotton quality, 16 July, 1955.

86. Sna Box 16 File 18/1 Clark to Director of Land Utilisation on his involvement with cotton development in south east Swaziland, 10 July, 1959.

87. See Swaziland Government: Annual Reports, 1959. p. 36.

88. Sna Box 16 File 18/1 Report of the Agricultural Officer on Swazi purchases of tractors to improve farming, 16 May, 1959.

89. Sna Box 50 File 52/3 SMC Correspondence to the Government Secretary, 18 September, 1958 on maize stability in Swaziland.

90. Sna Box 50 File 52/3 SMC to the Government Secretary on Swazi response to the maize market, 21 August, 1959.

91. Swaziland Colonial Annual Report, 1959, p. 36.

92. Sna Box 16 File 18/1 Clark to the Director of Land Utilisation on his involvement with cotton development, 10 July, 1959.

93. Sna Box 98 File 145 Report of the Agricultural Department on the establishment of a research station at Malkerns under the auspices of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 20 September, 1958.

TABLE C.  
APPROXIMATE VALUE OF THE PRINCIPAL COMMERCIAL CROPS  
EXPORTED FROM SWAZILAND, 1939-60.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOBACCO</u>	<u>COTTON</u>	<u>GROUNDNUTS</u>	<u>TUNGNUTS</u>	<u>SUGAR</u>
	(£) 000	(£)000	(£) 000	(£) 000	(£) 000
1939	10	-			
1940	13	-			
1941	11	-			
1942	9	-			
1943	22	2			
1944	14	-			
1945	18	-			
1946	18	-	-	-	-
1947	29	-	-	-	-
1948	30	5	21	6	-
1949	43	2	13	10	-
1950	45	25	10	20	-
1951	21	103	11	20	-
1952	30	114	12	45	-
1953	45	101	22	24	-
1954	29	155	52	36	-
1955	19	223	15	26	-
1956	19	199	16	13	-
1957	46	227	-	13	-
1958	63	178	3	2	55
1959	58	298	-	-	423
1960		267			

SOURCE: This table has been compiled from a variety of sources as set out below. The figures are only approximate, as it is impossible to decide whether the same criteria were used by all these sources. The Times of Swaziland, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1940. p. 5 gave cotton output and value for 1939; The Crown Colonist, February, 1943, "Cotton Production in Swaziland", p. 149, gave output and value for 1939-1940; Swaziland Annual Reports of the Director of Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1942 and 1943, gave

output and value for 1940-41, 1941-42; and 1942-43 on page 10; output and value for 1944 and 1945 were recorded in the issues for 1944-45, pp. 15 and 22 respectively. Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1946 and 1947, p. 39; 1948, p. 32; 1949, pp. 7 and 8; 1950, p. 26; 1951, p. 26; 1952, p. 28; 1953, p. 63; 1954, p. 63; 1955, p. 74; 1956, p. 80; 1957, p. 78; 1958, p. 82; and 1959, p. 36. But for the value of sugar cf. J.B. McL. Daniel, The Geography of the Rural Economy of Swaziland, (Durban: University of Natal, 1962), p. 241.



TABLE C (1)

PERCENTAGE VALUE OF THE PRINCIPAL CROPS EXPORTED FROM  
SWAZILAND 1946-60.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOBACCO</u>	<u>COTTON</u>	<u>GROUNDNUTS</u>	<u>TUNGNUTS</u>	<u>SUGAR</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
1946	100	-	-	-	-
1947	79	1	-	-	-
1948	49	8	34	9	-
1949	64	3	19	15	-
1950	43	24	10	19	-
1951	12	61	7	12	-
1952	15	55	6	22	-
1953	23	51	11	12	-
1954	11	56	19	13	-
1955	6	76	5	9	-
1956	7	77	6	5	-
1957	11	80	-	4	-
1958	20	57	1	1	17
1959	8	38	-	-	54
1960	3	17	-	-	80

SOURCE: J.B. McI Daniel, THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE RURAL  
ECONOMY OF SWAZILAND, (Durban: University of Natal, 1962), p.  
241.

TABLE C (2)

QUANTITY OF THE PRINCIPAL COMMERCIAL CROPS EXPORTED  
FROM SWAZILAND 1939-60

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>Tobacco</u> (S. tons)	<u>Cotton</u> (S. tons)	<u>Groundnuts</u> (S. tons)	<u>Tungnuts</u> (S. tons)	<u>Sugar</u> (S. tons)
1939	201	5			
1940	212	-			
1941	172	11			
1942	146	6			
1943	190	4			
1944	126	3			
1945	223	7			
1946	125*	-	-	-	-
1947	176*	7	-	-	-
1948	200*	104	-	-	-
1949	287	34	254	65	-
1950	335	308	202	100	-
1951	206	958**	500	80	-
1952	305	1,185**	297	212	-
1953	289	1,295	434	200	-
1954	189	1,792	856	300	-
1955	200	2,600	428	200	-
1956	171	2,650	824	80	-
1957	177	3,212	12	100	-
1958	453	2,635	70	20	7,236
1959	538	4,936	1	-	14,077
1960	480	4,171	52	-	57,156

SOURCE: Swaziland Veterinary and Agricultural Services, 1944-45, pp. 15 and 22 for years 1939-45; Swaziland Colonial Annual Reports, 1949, pp. 7-8; 1950, p. 26; 1953, p. 63; 1954, p. 63; 1955, p. 74; 1956, p. 80; 1957, p. 78; 1958, p. 82; 1959, p. 36; and years 1946, 1947, 1948, for both cotton and tobacco, and 1951 and 1952, cotton output figures, were taken from J.B. McL. Daniel, The Geography of the Rural Economy of Swaziland,

(Durban: University of Natal, 1962), p. 241, along with the output for sugar in the years indicated above. In those cases where only a dash instead of a figure appears its either the crop had not yet been grown or the output was not available for one reason or another.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN CATTLE and COTTON

1955-80

In a community whose economic base, in terms of the accumulation of wealth and its multiplication for re-investment, particularly in rural agricultural farming, was still very weak and uncertain, livestock filled the gap. In Swaziland cattle became the base upon which the agricultural economy, cotton cultivation particularly from 1955, was founded when there was no other strong source of finance. Since the Swazi society had dissociated land from private ownership, in the interests of saving the financially less able from becoming victims of the expanding capitalist system, cattle became the only means by which credit facilities could be solicited from the banks, and other finance organisations when they became available. But then banks, as financial organisations, took advantage of the situation, that is, the production of cotton and its dire requirements for finance and used it to render vulnerable cattle-rearing, which was the pillar of the Swazi traditional rural economy. This development ties up very well with the dependency theory which shows the methods capitalism has used, through international trade, to stagnate less developed economies of the world. It has done this by making these economies concentrate on the production of commodities which are export oriented even though the profits sometimes fall far below the production costs. In the process the less developed economies remain in that state and more dependent on the developed world.

Swazi people argued that cattle-keeping constituted a lucrative and beneficial investment area relative to banks, whose interest rates were very low. Swazi growers also ploughed their profits from cotton back into the purchase of livestock, particularly cattle, and other manufactured equipment to promote their agricultural economy. Swazi cultivators sought the means of improving their livestock particularly by cross-

breeding them with the type which commanded a good price at the market so that they could sell them for a handsome price which was later invested in the expansion of cotton cultivation. The need to improve Swazi traditional Nguni cattle was still part of the demand of international trade which was selective of the type of cattle that should enter the market so that not only did it provide for local needs but even external ones thereby becoming an international commodity. At this point there is need to bring in the T.W. Schultz concept of the 'technological factors of production' which talks of the use of chemical inputs to improve the market value of a commodity. In this case the Brahman which was introduced into Swazi cattle in the 1970s became more profitable to sell but also more expensive to keep than the traditional type. Banks were avoided by some cultivators on account of their interest rates being exorbitant and extortionate. The discussion at this point shows how such a relationship led to the disintegration of the neatly knit social structure, as the development of cotton cultivation gained momentum.

The economic role of cattle in the rural economy of Swaziland had been strictly limited to only a few areas such as sale whenever food production met with some disastrous episodes, and the social role was somewhat over-shadowed by the economic one. But apart from cattle being sold, cattle had been used quite predominantly, even long before the post-war period, as beasts of burden, whereby they were harnessed to pull a plough, a sledge and they featured in transportation.<sup>1</sup> In short, cattle had been used from time immemorial to promote rural sources of income, and it was at this level of the economic structure, that cattle predominantly shouldered the burden. However, the economic role which cattle played was expanded in the post-World War Two period to include a variety of other important aspects of that time. Having been freed from the economic noose of the chiefs in the post World War Two period, Swazi growers of the 1950s, particularly the latter half of the

decade, displayed flashes of dexterity in economic activities, and these included the improvement of the rural farming economy and other related activities, whose final goal was the improvement of the standard of living in rural Swaziland.<sup>2</sup>

However, the relationship which existed between cattle-rearing and cotton cultivation in the 1950s was rather more complex than the brief sketch above, in that sometimes it became problematic to tell which of the two economic activities was more important. Yet to the person who was directly involved, it was not as difficult to unravel the relationship, and avoid the puzzle of a chicken and an egg. In simple terms, cotton cultivation had been facilitated by the use of cattle, in this regard. In its initial stages, cotton had not necessarily depended for its cultivation on what T.W. Schultz calls the 'concealed technological factors of production', particularly, chemical fertilizers,<sup>3</sup> but depended on compost, and more so on kraal manure. Kraal manure improved the health of the crop and even the quality, given that other variables like weather and pest attack did not militate against the crop. But what continued to be wanting in spite of the widespread use of kraal manure, was the improvement of the yield capacity of the crop, which was later provided by more improved Schultz 'produced means of production'.<sup>4</sup> However, being unaware of the shortcomings of the crop which had been created by the lack of adequate funds and sometimes by the poverty of improved farming technology, the producer was not bothered by its yields. In the state of such ignorance kraal manure ruled supreme, and in that manner cattle provided some foundation upon which the development of Swazi cotton cultivation was later built.

By 1955, the history of cotton cultivation in south east Swaziland, particularly among the Swazi growers, was three years old. The plough was the most commonly used equipment for cultivating cotton, and it was pulled by oxen, though in some isolated cases, donkeys provided the draught power. However, since the use of donkeys delayed the completion of the cultivation process, until sometimes the suitable planting period

was long past due mainly to the fact that donkeys are slow by nature, most progressive growers relied on oxen to pull the plough. By 1957, there were very few cotton growers who used donkeys for ploughing, while for the transportation of cotton to depots where trucks collected it, donkeys continued to feature until the early 1960s.<sup>5</sup> Cotton growers had advanced to the stage where they bought ploughs and other implements to facilitate cotton cultivation. These included the harrow, though it was not very common then, the planter and the weeder. Where the iron harrow was not common, the wooden harrow, made by some farmers in the area, and resembling the iron one, was commonly used. The argument was that due to financial restrictions, poor growers could not afford to buy an iron harrow. However, the iron harrow was preferred by every farmer for the reason that it was more effective than the wooden harrow because of its weight. But the most important fact is that both forms of harrows were pulled by oxen to level up the surface of the field to facilitate the planting of seeds in straight lines. Levelled field surfaces did not only facilitate the planting in straight lines, but also helped to save seeds, which could otherwise have been wasted by lumps created by plough-shares.<sup>6</sup>

Cotton cultivators needed to use the plough in order to dig deep enough to expose grass roots to the sun so that regrowth took much longer where cotton was planted, for cotton required that the field should stay clean of any form of weed at all times. In this case the weeder could be used to remove the weeds that grew up between the lines much later after planting by which time the crop's height would be more than five inches. Both the use of the planter and the weeder and oxen proved to be helpful to the growers in so far as the saving of labour time and capital for investment elsewhere was concerned. After the weeder had been used to remove the weed between the lines, hoe-weeding was then concentrated between the plants and that saved both labour time and energy for investment elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

Oxen thus played an important role in cotton cultivation in south east Swaziland until very recently, and with the most progressive entrepreneurs, the role oxen played in cotton growing only began to fade away in the late 1970s, when they mechanized their farms. The work had come to depend largely on the tractors which operated equipment ranging from the plough to the sprayer, particularly in the early 1980s.<sup>8</sup> However, very few even among the farming tycoons had reached this level by the early 1980s, which meant that the use of oxen could not be written off so easily. Underlying the retention of oxen for draught power in the areas of cotton production as outlined above was the belief that tractors had the effect of making the soil very hard when used at planting and weeding time. Once the soil was pressed into a rock-like mass, the roots of the crops were hindered from penetrating it and that often affected the growth rate and even the full height of the plant was affected in the end.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the use of oxen did not lead to these problems which was the main reason for some of the farmers to continue to use them to plant and even to weed the cotton fields. In some cases, even harrowing was carried out by oxen for the same reasons given above which made farmers to shun the use of a tractor for planting and weeding. These fears were not unfounded rather they were based on the experiences of some farmers who were engaged in cotton cultivation and had worked on European farms in their youth, where they accumulated enough experience on the problems of farming, and those which were created by the use of a tractor in particular.<sup>10</sup>

In its initial stages of production, cotton was not particularly confined to those who owned cattle or donkeys. There was a difference between cattle ownership and cattle-keeping in the Swazi social set up. Those people who owned large numbers of cattle often divided them up and 'loaned' out some to their relatives usually for indefinite periods of time. The reasons behind the 'loaning' out of cattle to relatives and sometimes even to non-relatives, were many, but three were particularly important. First, if the cattle owner kept far more cattle than any of his neighbours or community members, he started to make



arrangements for the transfer of some to relatives who either kept very small herds of cattle or none in certain instances. The main cause for transferring the cattle in this regard was fear that those in the community who envied the owner for the large herd of cattle might either steal the cattle or bewitch both the owner and his cattle. But it was not just any needy relative that was given the cattle to look after rather it had to be one whose character was acceptable to the cattle owner. The needy relative had to possess some very important attributes of a diligent man: responsible and trustworthy.<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, it had to be a relative or a colleague who was well known for being a careful and successful herder. Either the cattle owner had some first hand information on this attribute or was advised by some relatives or colleagues whom he trusted not to mislead him. Such a person was approached and requested to accept custody over the cattle. This attribute was often accompanied by an innate scientific knowledge, on the part of the custodian, of some herbs that were used to ward off some bad omen that often affected the multiplication of the cattle and other livestock. Such innate attributes were not necessarily found among people who already owned cattle, rather some of these people 'built their kraals' in the course of practising their herbal skills.<sup>12</sup> In such cases, the custodian was often given a heifer for the responsibility of keeping the cattle, as some form of payment for the treatment he was going to administer to the cattle. In addition to the payment, he also enjoyed access to the services of the cattle in farming, where they were used as draught animals. He also had access to the kraal manure which accumulated in his byre and even helped himself to the milk of the cows. The benefits were quite considerable in return for the custody he provided.

Thirdly, there was a category of people who did not own cattle, but who recognised the importance of keeping cattle as rural dwellers, and they had eked out a living from the soil as farmers. Often these people knew those among their relatives, and sometimes even friends and colleagues, who owned large

numbers of cattle, and who might not suffer any inconvenience due to loaning part of their cattle to them (needy relatives).<sup>13</sup> In this category the initiative often lay with the person who required the cattle, and he was the one to approach the abundant man for the assistance which he required through a loan in cattle. The reasons are as specific here as in those cases where the owner of cattle took the initiative to seek the help of either a herbalist or the services of a responsible potential herder. In this case, however, the reasons were specifically agricultural, either the farming of maize or cotton, and was accompanied by access to kraal manure. The response of the owner was often governed by the reputation of the potential custodian within his community, if he had a long history in the community, but if not, his reputation was often investigated from his immediate former community. This was done for security reasons. Expertise in cattle keeping was not always seen as a determining factor, though if the custodian had had an exposure as a herder, that served as an added advantage to his favour.<sup>14</sup>

Apart from this traditional practice where cattle were transferred from patron to custodian, in the 1950s when cotton cultivation expanded most of those people who did not own any, and had used donkeys for cultivation, began to solicit the cooperation of those cattle-owners whom they knew.<sup>15</sup> The impact of this social cord had held society together, and continued to knit, not just extended families, but even society together, and at this point cooperation was strengthened even more than before. At least in 1957, when the scale on which cotton was grown began to expand per grower, those who owned large numbers of cattle, for instance upwards of 60, had found it more convenient to reduce their cattle to manageable levels to facilitate herding even by young boys.<sup>16</sup> Herdboys were mainly young boys because older boys had either gone to school or felt that they were too old to look after cattle and went to seek employment to earn cash. On the other hand the head of each family had become fully engaged in cotton cultivation since the average acreage had grown up to about 5 per season, and only in few cases did the cultivated land exceed the above number per

grower per season.<sup>17</sup> At this point cotton cultivation was more extensive than intensive, which meant that there were more acres put under the crop per grower per season than the actual amount of cotton that was harvested. At least this indicates the degree of excitement with which cotton cultivation had been carried out.<sup>18</sup>

The symbiotic nature of this socio-economic cooperation, which built up some interdependence between the various parties involved, was determined by the needs of each party. Labour was no longer the abundant and under-utilised commodity in the production process it had once been at the time when the crop had just been introduced. In short, this cooperation, which was built on the terms on which cattle were 'loaned out', became the foundation upon which the wealth of some present entrepreneurs was built. This form of cooperation built itself into an intricate socio-economic network whereby the destitute members seem to have neatly identified their shortcomings and sought economic assistance from those who possessed a firm economic muscle, and the long term objective was to improve their weak socio-economic background. For instance, most of those who became custodians of other people's cattle did not own even ploughs.<sup>19</sup> In the same community there were people who had already purchased ploughs which were pulled by donkeys, at a time when a 'span' of more powerful animals was required. In the event, the 'one-legged' farmer approached his own kind to forge some economic cooperation to help bridge the 'gaping' need. Most of the cultivation tasks in this regard were alternate, in that while they attended to one of the party's farming on one day, the next day they did work on the fields of the other.<sup>20</sup>

But the problematic issue which remained unsolved was that of the purchases of ploughs by people who did not own cattle. One of the questions concerned the means by which the plough was bought and the objectives, when there were no oxen to pull it. Perhaps to avoid repetition, donkeys had been used and while the farming was monocultural and subsistence oriented, donkeys

were good enough to meet the economic needs of the grower but when the farming economy became diversified, some more powerful animals were required, and oxen filled the gap. Ownership of cattle was not a determinant for plough purchases, a point already mentioned, because a dozen chickens or even a goat could be bartered for a plough. The underlying factor in all these cases of plough purchases was the need to respond to farming requirements, and not for any other purpose. The significant role played by donkeys in a subsistence oriented economy cannot be overlooked, but the focus of this study is not on this aspect. Suffice to say that donkey power was central to the survival of many families, since donkey ploughing was even hired out where money or some livestock were used as currency to settle the costs of the services.<sup>21</sup> In this way, donkey ploughing paved the way for ploughing by oxen.

Most of the diligent farmers who depended on 'loaned cattle' for cultivating cotton were shrewd business-minded people who had been curbed from the ownership of cattle and prosperity in general by their destitute economic backgrounds. For instance, after the cooperation, which had been forged between the economically handicapped farmers, time had been set aside to cultivate fields of people who did not own the forces of production.<sup>22</sup> In these cases either the payment was made in kind, that is, an agreement was signed where the host agreed to weed cotton fields of his patron. Already, access to cattle, whether owned or 'loaned', bred a class of clients for even other clients, and those who were ingenious were successful in using these advantages to boost their economies. The spoils were often shared equitably between the owners or custodians of the forces of production. But there were cases where these noble terms were violated, particularly if the two people belonged to different religious beliefs. One such case in 1958, for instance, was revealed where one member was a christian and did not believe in cultivating his fields nor those of the clients on sundays, since that could have conflicted with his christian beliefs that 'sunday was a resting day not only for human beings but even for the animals because it was a holy day'. On the other hand, the other

party, who was not a christian, went ahead to cultivate not only his own fields but even those of his clients and pocketed all the proceeds without sharing them with the other member of the duet.<sup>23</sup> In this way, the economic advancement, growing out of the cooperation was grossly unequal, and this was no unusual conduct on the part of businessmen, since the business involved shrewdness and sometimes a high degree of disreputable conduct. On the other hand the maintenance of the plough and other related means of production were shared equitably between the undertakers of the business, at least in principle while in practice it was a different case, since shrewd members always found a way of evading the financial obligation.<sup>24</sup>

The benefits which accrued to these businessmen as a result of their involvement in plough and oxen hire to those who did not own these means were often invested in the improvement of their farming technology. In this manner one of the tycoons in the area, built up his wealth on such stealth and beguiled means. Before the end of 1958, having grown cotton for only one season, 1957/58, he had already purchased a plough and two head of cattle, both of which were young bullocks.<sup>25</sup> However, his progress on stealth was successfully complemented by his diligence and devotion to cotton production. He had used part of the money earned from cotton and payment in kind, collected on the cultivation of other people's fields, wisely to boost his cotton cultivation. It was in 1959, a third year of his cotton cultivation that he began to use chemical fertilizers to boost the surplus generating capacity of the soil, particularly in those areas where it was declining.<sup>26</sup> By that year he already owned two ploughs and four head of cattle, after he had joined his colleague with only one plough and no cattle. He also decided to approach a relative to ask him to lend him three oxen and the purpose was to facilitate farming, and he promised to return them on the following season, and that was exactly what he did. He also decided to sever ties with his erstwhile colleague, who was still as poor as he was when the two formed the economic duet. The latter had not purchased even a plough. However, either in compassion or in return for the surplus value he had

appropriated from his retrogressing colleague, he (the progressive one) offered to sell the old plough to him late in 1959 at a give away price of about 25 pence mainly because it was already old, and needed some major repairs.<sup>27</sup>

The role cattle played in the cotton economy became very complicated when the cattle which were loaned to needy relatives were later used by the custodians to build their own class of clients through the cultivation of the latter's cotton fields. It was the custodian class of clients, however, that appeared to be more exploitative of the plight of those cotton growers who did not own any means of production. This exploitation was even more complicated in those cases where the have-nots did not have even money for the payment of the services rendered to them, instead they had chosen to pay in kind, and their labour was given a very low value. This gross inequality in the evaluation of the labour services of the have-nots became clear when some of them found themselves weeding the fields of their pseudo-patrons for the rest of the cotton planting season.<sup>28</sup>

The use of a sledge for transportation purposes became widespread in south east Swaziland after 1955. However, this period also coincided with the gradual expanding use of a tractor for transport, an aspect which became very important when more bales had to be taken to the local depots from where they were picked up by the company's truck. The widespread use of the sledge was made necessary by the expanding output in maize and cotton whose transportation from the fields could no longer depend upon portage as the case was when the demand was not as elastic as it became in the mid 1950s. Growers who depended on hiring draught animal power for ploughing were caught in a vicious circle, since not only did they end there, particularly in fair seasons they had to hire draught animal power for the transportation of the output from the fields. In the case of cotton, it was when bales required to be moved to nearby depots in particular that oxen were hired to transport them on a sledge.<sup>29</sup> However, the sledge soon displayed some shortcoming by exposing the bales to stumps which were not uprooted from

the pathway, and these stumps tore the bales and the contents were spoiled. Because of this shortcoming, the sledge was replaced by wagons in some cases, both long and short ones.<sup>30</sup>

In the case of short wagons (carts), only two oxen were required to pull one, unless there was a steep hill that needed climbing before reaching the depot. In the latter case, four oxen were harnessed. However, regarding the long wagon which often took the maximum of six bales, six oxen were harnessed. Sometimes eight oxen were harnessed to pull it on long distances. Long distances were undertaken to transport the bales to the depots from where Ralli Brothers truck collected them, especially because depots were found along the main roads. This arrangement was not convenient for everybody since some of the growers were as far away from the main roads and depots as seven miles, and even the route which led to these depots was generally hazardous due to slopy gradients and sandy river beds.<sup>31</sup> All of these factors caused transport problems even by wagons, and this explains the need to harness six or more oxen to pull the wagons. At least at the time when modern means of transportation were not available or in restricted circulation, the use of wagons was the only reliable means of transportation and cattle were the main force behind the wide usage of the wagon. In this manner oxen did not only play a significant role in the development of cotton cultivation at the production stage, but remained central to the whole process until the crop was finally sold to the market.

In the 1960s, most of the cultivators of south east Swaziland had come to realise the central role wagons played in the development of cotton cultivation. This significant role loomed prominently in the transportation aspect, not only of the baled cotton, but sometimes even at harvest time. This was common among those growers whose fields lay far from their homesteads, sometimes they were as far as ten miles, and it was cheaper to send many empty jute and plastic bags to the fields so that picked cotton could be packed in them and later on the same day be loaded on the wagon.<sup>32</sup> Porterage was avoided to save labour

for investment in picking, and in this way ample labour was used profitably in picking more cotton than it could have been if the labour was employed for transportation. While it would be wrong to rule out the possibility of using donkeys as draught animals, it seems that oxen were preferred to donkeys on agility and even for the reasons that oxen were more powerful than donkeys. This fact cannot be denied more particularly because in the cultivation of the fields, the donkey was being replaced by oxen by the late 1950s.<sup>33</sup> These wagons were often hired out to transport the cotton of those growers whose means of transportation were limited to portage. Wagon supply in the region was limited, and ownership of one was yet another sign of economic growth and prosperity. In short, wagons, just like a full span of oxen, were signs of prosperity and were not very common.<sup>34</sup> Money that was made on such businesses all revolving around cotton, was invested in the development of either the land or any aspect of cotton cultivation.

The importance of oxen and the wagon also became noticeable when Malangwane Dlamini travelled more than 75 miles from his home area at the foot of the Lubombo Mountains to the market at Magudu (see above p 106). The wagon was loaded with cotton and pulled by oxen to Magudu only to be intercepted by Ralli Brothers' truck at Matsanjeni. The use of oxen was even depended upon by the growers who owned tractors which could have been used for transportation as in the case of the latter grower. The main reason to use oxen when the tractor was available was not simply that the farmer perhaps did not have confidence in himself as a driver, but rather he was afraid that the fuel might run out before he reached his destination. There were not as many fuel stations then as there are today.<sup>35</sup> But oral research made claims that cases where such long distances were undertaken, the oxen did not belong to the grower but were 'loaned' cattle. Lack of consideration for the animals was believed to be common among the custodians of 'loaned' cattle and they were the ones who undertook long distances, and even ploughed twice a day, in the morning and afternoon, a practice which weighed very heavily on the health of



the animals. This conduct was looked upon by cattle owners as representative of the misuse of animals, and resulted in the recovery of the 'loaned' cattle.<sup>36</sup> This reaction led to the deterioration of the social relationship that had been built upon this culture. In the long run, the zeal to expand one's cotton fields and accumulate capital through the use of 'loaned' cattle led to the deterioration of the foundation upon which the social fabric had leaned. It is, however, important to note that such conduct was rare, and wherever it was spotted it resulted in the recovery of the cattle.<sup>37</sup>

Yet another social aspect of cattle rearing which developed in the area, late in the 1950s, and was reinforced by certain factors in the years that followed, was arranged marriage between the have-nots and people who owned large numbers of cattle. In this case the initiative lay with the father of a daughter who was either in puberty or had not even reached that stage. In order to build up both a kraal and later a span of oxen, a daughter was given to some rich man and *lobolo* was paid in cattle.<sup>38</sup> This social development indicated the impact of the money economy on south east Swaziland. As in other instances, however, this development was not commonplace but confined to some of those families who had been financially handicapped by lack of cattle which played a key role in the development of cotton cultivation. This custom was part of Swazi culture, and predated the cotton era, but the dimension which cotton added to it in the late 1950s, was that the daughter's father used such a marriage to get cattle (payment for *lobolo*) immediately after the agreement had been sealed. Yet another social development was the practice of marrying one's daughter to men who were rich, and not necessarily men who were reputed for a good conduct as the practice had been before the cotton era. In short, cotton expansion and its looming dependence on cattle had adulterated the social system of *kwendzisa* - arrangement of marriage for one's daughter to men of good reputation, particularly in their communities.<sup>39</sup> It is, however, important to note that not all poverty-stricken fathers fell headlong to this evil practice.

However, not every man who acquired cattle in this manner invested them wisely, particularly in the development of cotton cultivation, since that was the main motive behind arranged marriages in the late 1950s. But in cases where cattle were invested in cotton cultivation, the investments assumed the purchase of requisite inputs such as tractors. Initially these tractors should have been bought to promote the owner's farming economy, but this objective was often diverted to other less exerting areas of investment such as the hiring out of tractors to those who needed their services. The services were paid for in cash, in goats, or sometimes in half a dozen chickens, most of which were consumed instead of being kept to multiply and expand other investments. These were spent instead on a lavish lifestyle which developed under the guise of the development of cotton cultivation that expanded in the 1960s.<sup>40</sup> The main explanation behind such a flamboyant lifestyle was that wealth which had been acquired on a silver plate ended up in some misguided investments. But there were exceptions, where wealth acquired through arranged marriages was invested in profit generating areas, for instance, the development of cotton cultivation. In cases where tractors were bought along with their small wagons or carts, those growers who did not possess such efficient means of transportation, hired these tractors. In this manner cotton cultivation was promoted mainly by means of inputs whose purchases were made possible by the owners' access to cattle.<sup>41</sup>

By the early 1960s it was becoming obvious that cotton growers of south east Swaziland required some additional finance other than that which was provided by their cattle to maintain the expansion of cotton cultivation. For instance, spraying had become unavoidable for every grower due to the rate at which pests had multiplied correspondingly with the extent of their destruction on the crop. At this time there were no credit facilities which had been extended to the benefit of the Swazi grower, especially those with rates of interest which were manageable to the Swazi grower. Cattle were sold to raise the money which was invested in the purchase of requisite inputs

such as fertilizers, insecticides and others. The type of seeds which were planted then were such that unless some chemical fertilizers were used, the growth and fruiting ability of the crop were often affected adversely. While small livestock were sold, particularly in areas less suited for cotton cultivation such as Sandleni and some areas in Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun, in areas where the scale of cotton production had greatly increased, money raised through the sale of some small livestock, fell short of the production costs. In south east Swaziland, cotton cultivation had expanded by the early 1960s, and therefore more money was required to purchase adequate amounts of inputs, and cattle were sold to bridge this financial gap.<sup>42</sup>

In 1965, the Swaziland Development and Savings Bank was inaugurated by the king with the purpose of financing not just cash crop production, but farming in general.<sup>43</sup> As part of its economic package to the Swazi was the bank's ambitious plan to help promote Swazi entrepreneurship in the construction of flats to rent out in the urban areas. Cotton growers were accommodated in the package which concerned itself with the development of Swazi agriculture. In its initial stages, the bank had signed out loans to farmers without requiring them to give security against the money. However, the financial grants made in good faith soon proved to have many loopholes, chief among which was the grower's deliberate avoidance of repayments not only at the specified times, but altogether. Consequently, in 1972, the bank introduced the need for security against any credit facilities that were sought from it by the farmer.<sup>44</sup> In the case of SNL growers, security assumed the form of cattle, and tractors in the case where the farmer owned one. It was hoped that the security would make the farmer more responsible than he had proved to be before the introduction of security measures. Before the introduction of security, whenever farmers failed to meet the repayment deadlines, excuses given were generally based on the destruction of the crop by climatic conditions, even when the season was good. In fact, farmers had avoided their payments deliberately, and not because of crop failures which affected the profits of each grower.<sup>45</sup>

The repercussions of this scheme on the growers were great not only in disrupting farming but in other areas. Cattle that had been given as security to the bank were branded, and instructions given to the debtor not to sell the branded cattle, or send them away from his byre, nor even harness them as beasts of burden. Growers who failed to repay their debts forfeited their cattle unless they had other sources of income to raise the sum of money equivalent to the bank loan plus interest. In the latter case cattle were not lost to the bank, because it had accepted such an arrangement. The social repercussion of this security was adverse because some producers forfeited cattle that had been loaned to them. Whenever the cattle were forfeited in this manner the irresponsible custodians were stripped of such rights, and this led to them (custodians) failing to prosecute their farming commitments. The future arrangements were that unless the potential custodian was well-known to the owner no cattle were given under the previous arrangement. Usually social relations became very tense and there was lack of cooperation between the affected parties. In certain cases custodians reported some of the cattle to have been stolen when they had actually been sold to raise money to promote cotton cultivation. However, whatever strategy was followed by the custodians to swindle their patrons, the truth about what actually happened to the cattle was revealed in the long run.<sup>46</sup>

There were many other areas in which cattle and the money raised through their sale was invested in an effort to promote cotton cultivation. Cattle were also invested in the purchase of the means of transportation, particularly from the late 1960s. With the cotton output having expanded to sometimes more than 100 bales of seed cotton per grower in the region, the Clark transport became inadequate to take all the bales at the time growers expected their cotton to be sent to the market.<sup>47</sup> Some growers operated on very stringent budgets which forced them to sell their crop at specific times, and when these expectations were not met, due to limited transport, they purchased individual means of transport. Not every grower who entertained these

feelings, however, possessed adequate credit to purchase his own transport, be it in the form of cattle or cash. As late as 1967, farmers still practised the habit of pooling limited resources together in order to meet these needs.<sup>48</sup> Cattle were often sold to raise the money for the purchase of trucks. If a used truck was available in the area, particularly on European farms, cattle were used as currency to buy the truck. One such example is that of Messrs Xaba Brothers' Transport whose transportation of cotton began in 1953, and rescued Swazi cotton growers from being exploited by European settler farmers, particularly in the case of Albert Vilakati, Adrian Harrison, David Dlamini, Lokhakhi Dlamini, Josiah Vilakati, Amos Matse and Samuel Nsibande. The last two growers, who had been successful in establishing themselves in cotton growing, owed their prosperity to the venture made by the Xaba Brothers. Even they had used cattle to start off the business in transport.<sup>49</sup>

The 1970s changed the face of the history of cotton production by showing some major steps which were taken by some farmers to invest their cattle in the acquisition of title deed land, as opposed to communally held land in SNL. The reasons for this development were mainly economic, in that privately owned land, provided more security to the farmer and gave him more latitude for land improvement whose benefits were reflected not only in the expansion of the output but even in the quality of the commodity that was produced. Private land was secure in the sense that the farmer did not suffer any interventions from the chief about his land use patterns, the customary sanctions against land enclosure and other related problems that could have had some adverse effects on cotton production. Investors in the development of cotton cultivation needed far more than the average amount of land the chief allocated, because their plans were rather too ambitious to be met by traditional means of land distribution. Not only did they concentrate on cotton, since the climate favoured it, but they attempted to grow food crops as well such as maize and others. Having acquired tractors they were able to expand their farming and even complete the planting of all the crops long before the season was over. Such an

expansion could only be met through the acquisition of privately owned land,<sup>50</sup> but this did not mean abandoning allocated land on SNL, hence some continued to keep their feet in both worlds. Cattle had been used as currency sometimes, though it had often been found convenient to sell a certain number of cattle and pay for the farm in cash. Payment in cash avoided all the unnecessary suspicions of swindling from either side which might have been the case where cattle were used directly for the payment.<sup>51</sup>

However, it would be wrong to give the impression that in most of the cases, cattle were used without any other form of subsidy from the financing organisations to purchase private land. For instance, most farms were only purchased in the mid 1970s, and by this time the Swazi Bank met part of the financial requirements of the farmers. But in this case cattle were not required for security since in those cases where the farmer failed to repay the loan the farm could be confiscated by the bank. In fact, the farm remained a property of the bank until the loan had been repaid in full, in spite of the fact that part of the price had been met through the sale of cattle. In most cases the farmers who acquired farms through these means worked very hard to repay the debts and the farms were later registered under their names. It is crucial though not to lose sight of the direction of the argument, and that is to try and show that cattle formed the basis upon which such prosperity was built. The profits from this investment were often ploughed back into the purchase of cattle and land improvement and these were later reflected in the rise of the cotton output per farmer. <sup>52</sup>

In those cases where farmers feared credit organisations and therefore avoided committing themselves to any financial institution, cattle were the source of the finance. Not only did these farmers sell their cattle live to meat factories or any other form of buyer, but they opened up butcheries in the rural areas. The argument was that butcheries, where beef was sold, yielded more profit than the sale of live cattle did. In the butcheries, not only was there sold raw beef, but some of it was also cooked, roasted and sold particularly to hungry passers-by, or even to

local <sup>u</sup>drunkards since it had become common practice to attach some bottle store to each butchery, or in certain instances, sell home brewed beer. In either case, the rate at which both raw and cooked or roasted beef sold, was high because drunk people had a high appetite for meat. The profits which accrued to the farmer from these businesses were ploughed into cotton cultivation, and when the season was fair, resulting in a handsome output and good returns, more cattle were purchased to continue the economic interdependence between cattle and the cultivation of cotton. The type of cattle that Swazi farmers had kept until the late 1970s, and particularly the beginning of the 1980s, were the Nguni scrub cattle, small but had a high degree of resistance to most of the diseases that attacked cattle.<sup>53</sup> But with the expansion of the money economy, and particularly for the finance of cotton cultivation, traditional Swazi cattle proved unsuitable for the market demands because of their small body which was reflected in their low weight. However, some of the farmers, particularly those who were prosperous cotton growers, had already begun to replace their traditional Nguni cattle with the modern type, whose rearing was geared specifically towards meeting market demands.

This stage of economic growth had been brought about through cross-breeding the Nguni type of cattle with the modern market oriented breed of the Brahman. This cross-breed of cattle, popularly found today in south east Swaziland, had yet other very unpleasant effects on the purse of the poor farmer. Unlike the Nguni breed, whose resistance to diseases was relatively high, that of the Brahman, was relatively low. As a result of the susceptibility to diseases, farmers had to ensure that their cattle were inoculated at the beginning of each season, to protect them against the attack of any of the diseases that often broke out in the region. Failure to carry out these inoculation measures often involved farmers in some major losses whose impact was also reflected on the development of cotton cultivation.<sup>54</sup> There were different types of farmers in the region in terms of ideologies: there were those who, even though they had agreed to cross-breed their Nguni scrub of cattle with the Brahman (whose

rearing was meant first and foremost for the market) but who refused to inoculate their livestock against diseases that broke out and those who became full converts. The Brahman was believed to have initially come from America and was being introduced into Swaziland on the basis of its strength in the market for those farmers whose farming economy was already market oriented. South east Swaziland was already settled by such a class of farmers irrespective of the fact that some of them were still poor to afford to maintain the new breed that was introduced. The strength of the market demand for the Brahman could not be disputed, and the fact that by 1980, the Brahman had already spread throughout the region among the cotton farmers was adequate evidence of the many attractions it held apart from the fact that its physical appearance tantalised the farmers to get it to cross-breed with their cattle.<sup>55</sup>

However, those farmers who had cross-bred their cattle with the Brahman but did not inoculate the cross-breed of cattle against epidemic diseases in that area paid very heavily for the consequences of that negligence. Each season experienced a different kind of epidemic whose impact was heavy on livestock. On the other hand, there were those farmers who resisted cross-breeding and whenever they sold their Nguni type of cattle, they were paid below expectation and the effects were seen in the reduction of the fields they had previously cultivated with cotton. In some cases the land was not reduced but due to the lack of adequate capital with which to purchase the inputs the output was always disproportionate to the amount of land that had been cultivated. In both cases, the farmers were not so much against cross-breeding their cattle as the purchase of the medicine they required to maintain their livestock. In fact some of the farmers had been suspicious that the government wanted to kill their cattle deliberately by introducing the Brahman that was susceptible to so many diseases, and also that the introduction of the latter breed was a strategy for the government to promote the businesses of those companies that produced the medicine they were being advised to buy.<sup>55</sup> In this way the farmers saw themselves being pushed into some tight corner where they



needed to buy the medicine in order to protect their cattle against any diseases that threatened to wipe out their source of finance for cotton cultivation. As indicated above this group of farmers was opposed to any form of credit facility other than that which was provided by their cattle, first, because they were suspicious that the organisations were bent on swindling them, and this attitude was strengthened by their observations of what happened to some of their colleagues in the region among those who became poor by the interest rates that were charged by the organisations which provided them with some credit facilities in the past. Secondly, the farmers had lacked some clear understanding of how the financial organisations operated in terms of the interest rates which banks charged their customers against any loan they were granted.<sup>57</sup>

In those cases where the cross-breed was close to the pure breed of the imported market oriented cattle, the problem was that farmers could not harness these cattle for ploughing, because they resisted being harnessed. Where force was used to harness them, the equipment for harnessing was either torn or broken thereby creating some unprecedented delay and loss in time. Sometimes in the case of the yoke which took long to break the oxen were strangled to death or some major injuries sustained and these caused unnecessary delay to planting. In some rare cases even the farmer or his assistant would be injured, yet another cause of delay in the planting schedule.<sup>58</sup> As a result of the widespread impact of the commercialisation of cattle in an effort to balance the interdependence between agricultural and pastoral farming, particularly that of cotton production, farmers, even poverty-stricken ones were gradually forced to rely more on the tractor which they hired from those who owned it. The hiring of a tractor was very expensive particularly for the poor farmers more so because the rates were more than E20.00 per hour by the late 1970s.<sup>59</sup> Either the farmer in this case sold the cattle to raise money for the hire of the tractor or sold a big number of cattle to buy his own tractor to facilitate cotton production. And that was the main purpose of the whole scheme, that of cross-breeding cattle to mechanise the farming sector to improve the

quality of production in all the crops. Secondly, to raise the output per grower because the acreage certainly expanded when the tractor was employed to do the cultivation of the fields, relative to what actually happened when cattle were still the only force behind farming.<sup>60</sup> But the purchase of a tractor was only possible in cases where the farmer owned more than twenty head of cattle, which number could have comfortably raised sufficient money with which to purchase a used tractor. In a nutshell, the impact of cotton cultivation on farmers did not necessarily strike some equitable balance between the two economies: cotton cultivation and cattle rearing. In some cases, the survival of one meant the doom of the other. For instance, a cross-breed of the Brahman worked out very well for those farmers whose dependence on oxen for the development of cotton cultivation, particularly as draught animals, was minimal while its effects on the poor farmer, who depended on the oxen for cotton cultivation as well as for its transportation from the fields and to the depot, were disastrous.<sup>61</sup>

It was not difficult to get a Brahman bull to cross-breed the Nguni stock of cattle because government had set up a scheme whereby each farmer could be lent one to keep for a specific time to mate with his Nguni stock. The cross-breed required large amounts of grass and water, which development was convenient for those farmers who already owned farms which were enclosed to keep at bay other cattle from competing for the grass which he had reserved for his cattle. This turn of events became clear in the 1980s, when the grazing grounds were shrinking very rapidly in the face of cotton expansion. The only available space where cattle could be grazed were the hills which did not permit for cotton cultivation due to lack of arable and fertile land. But whenever droughts struck, the hilly grazing grounds dried up faster than other areas, making it difficult for farmers to continue to graze their stock there. It was at this point that owners of private farms were approached by those who did not own any, to seek permission to graze their cattle, but on a certain charge per cow per month. The charge ranged from about E2.00 to E3.00, depending on the amicable relations which might have existed

between the two parties.<sup>62</sup> But there were very few among the poor farmers who could afford to pay for their cattle to graze on private farms, and whenever droughts struck, and one spectacular example was the severe and destructive drought of 1985, and other years before, the losses could be as high as 15 herds of cattle or even more per homestead.<sup>63</sup>

In an effort to facilitate the commercialisation of cattle-rearing, the government also went ahead to establish grazing grounds, where cows were acceptable, and on these grazing grounds only the pure bulls of the imported breed were kept to cross-breed with the Nguni cattle. To facilitate the scheme so that everybody who wished to partake of it gained access, government did not insist on cash for the rental of the cows which were being cross-bred, rather an agreement was clinched between the two parties whereby at the end of a year, (depending on the number of cattle the farmer had sent to the ranch) one cow could be held by the government as rental for the services of grazing, cross-breeding, and also providing the required medical treatment while the cattle were still held on the grazing grounds. All these responsibilities were shouldered by the government.<sup>64</sup> But not every farmer had accepted the latter arrangement, some argued that payment in cattle was a loss to the farmer and yet whenever one cow was sold and payment made in cash, some of the money could be saved for investment elsewhere. Among the progressive cotton growers, money realised from selling the crop was used to pay the rental for the retention of cattle on the ranch. In spite of the financial costs incurred through sending one's cattle to the ranch, the project was believed to be satisfactory and supportive of the cotton industry. But the main problem was that it was the already rich farmers who were granted the right to send their cattle to the ranch while the poor had their applications filed up. And this attitude had some adverse effects on the development of cotton cultivation particularly by poverty-stricken farmers.<sup>65</sup>

In spite of the problems of grazing grounds, Nguni cattle were reduced to the minimum in south east Swaziland. Most of

the cattle found there were cross-breeds of one kind or another, particularly by 1980, and the explanation was the bias of the market for the cross-breeds. Those business organisations who bought cattle did so for reasons of slaughtering the beasts to sell the beef. Nguni cattle lacked the commercial weight because the buyers had already begun to buy cattle on the basis of the weight each cow produced at the market by 1980,<sup>66</sup> and the smaller the weight the little would be the money, and in that case the expenses of cultivating cotton would not be met adequately without seeking other avenues for financial support required to produce the crop. On the other hand the cross-breeds possessed a commercial weight, and yet another added advantage was that their beef was tender <sup>9</sup>relative to that of the Nguni stock which was hard but tasty. Those who operated butcheries had found selling beef of cross-breeds more profitable than selling that of the Nguni scrub cattle.<sup>67</sup> In 1980 two of the richest cotton growers of the region were hit very hard by drought conditions so they could not settle their debts with the bank. In order to settle the debts, one of them sold about 200 of his cattle, all of his 400 or more goats, while the other one sold all of his 200 or more cattle to raise money to settle the debts which were in the region of E30,000 each. Because they had started on other businesses, they had just managed to purchase adequate fertilizers to plant in the following season without recourse to any bank.<sup>68</sup> However, what is worth noting is that had it not been for the cross-breed stock of cattle which were sold to raise the required money, the farmers could have forfeited their farms or some of the farming inputs like tractors, trucks and part of the other investments such as stores.

Those Swazi who resisted to cross breed with the Brahman crossed their cattle with the Afrikander, which did not resist harnessing to pull the plough and do the other related ploughing tasks. The Afrikander was even less susceptible to the common diseases that attacked cattle in the area, and it could be milked, roles which were resisted by the Brahman. In short, the Afrikander supported cotton cultivation by providing the draught power for most of the work that farming entailed and required

that it be done by oxen.<sup>69</sup> It could also be sold at a better price than that at which the Nguni cattle were sold. Its beef was more tender compared to that of the Nguni, but slightly below that of the Brahman even in quality. Its maintenance was cheaper than that of the Brahman because it did not die in large numbers even if it was not inoculated. Its distribution among the farmers in the region was more determined by the market price than anything else. The shortcomings of the Nguni cattle appeared too big for it to compete effectively for the other roles such as those which were filled in by the Afrikaner in particular.<sup>70</sup>

The discussion has shown that cattle formed an important foundation upon which the cotton industry was built in south east Swaziland, and later the two economic sectors became clearly interdependent, particularly in 1955 when cattle were bartered for tractors, and the money which accrued from this was invested in the purchase of more cattle and those inputs which allowed for the continued expansion of cotton cultivation to meet the market demands. In the years that followed, particularly in the 1960s, cattle boosted cotton cultivation by acting as a means for acquiring capital from those financial organisations which provided it. Most of the rural entrepreneurs, displayed some traditional view of cattle-rearing by showing that its survival was dependent upon the cotton profits. Empirical evidence proved wrong the view of the static economic role cattle played in the Swazi rural economy when cattle became the pillar of the farming economy. However, later and particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, not every cotton grower could afford the expenses it involved, and that was the beginning of the impoverishment of some farmers.

### NOTES

1. Sna Box 117 cvf 1/8b Report of the Principal Veterinary and Agricultural Officer on the development of land use patterns, the use of oxen in tilling the soil as part of the training for the agricultural demonstrators, 20 June, 1945.

immemorial, but in the 1950s, when agricultural demonstrators campaigned for some improvement in maize production, the use of manures, both compost and kraal, was encouraged. Sna Box 98 File 145 Report of the Agricultural Officer on the impact of agricultural demonstrators on the use of kraal manure to improve the output in maize, Central district, 5 June, 1957; Box 15 File 18<sup>2</sup> Quarterly report of agricultural demonstrators on the use of kraal manure for cotton production, 11 November, 1957.

3. See T.W. Schultz, Transforming Traditional Agriculture (New York: Arno Press, Reprint, 1976), pp. 133-47.

4. Ibid; p. 133-37.

5. Sna Box 92 File 131<sup>2</sup> Department of Agriculture monthly report of the demonstrators on the problems of development in agricultural farming, the use of oxen and donkeys, December, 1968; Box 83 File 116/3<sup>3</sup> Monthly report of the Assistant Agricultural Officer, Shiselweni District, on the problems of donkey power in farming and transportation, 5 May, 1967.

6. Sna Box 83 File 116/4 Monthly reports of the Agricultural Officer, Manzini District, 5 July 1960 on the importance of planting in straight lines, some Swazi growers were already doing it.

7. Sna Box 92 File 131<sup>3</sup> Agricultural Officer to the Extension Agricultural Officer, Shiselweni District, Nhlanguano, on the labour and time saving devices of some farming inputs, 16 June, 1971.

8. This was true of most of the farmers who owned tractors but even those who did not own any most of the equipment were pulled by oxen.

9. Even farmers who depended on tractors for the cultivation of cotton alleged that this view was factual. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 17 August, 1985; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 17 August, 1985; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 17 August, 1985; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 11 March, 1986, and many others.

10. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 17 August, 1985; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 17 August, 1985; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 17 August, 1985; Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 17 August, 1985.

11. Interview Ndawonye Sikhondze, Lulakeni, 12 August, 1986; Almon Nkambule, Lavumisa, 17 May, 1987; Petros Dlamini, Mlindazwe, 17 May, 1987; Amos Matsebula, Sitilo, 17 May, 1987, and others confirmed this view.
12. Interview Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 17 May, 1987; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 17 May, 1987; Phesheya Mhlongo, Hlushwana, 8 July, 1987; Jotham Simelane, Mgamudze, 8 July, 1987; and Abel Masuku, Mgamudze, 8 July, 1987.
13. Interview Abel Masuku, Mgamudze, 8 July, 1987; Majozi Zulu, Mlindazwe, 18 July, 1987, Muntu Nkosi, Mganwini, 18 July, 1987; and Macala Mavuso, Mganwini, 18 July, 1987.
14. Interview Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 29 July, 1987; Mampondvo Kunene, Nsalitje, 29 July, 1987; Maphumzane Dlodlu, Mlindazwe, 29 July, 1987; and Elma Ndlangamandla, Mganwini, 11 August, 1987.
15. Sna Box 7 File 7/25 Quarterly Report of the Agricultural Demonstrator on some handicaps to improving agricultural farming in the Hlushwana cotton growing area, 11 September, 1971; corroborated by Mampondvo Kunene, Nsalitje, 29 July, 1987; Elijah Gamedze, Mgamudze, 29 July, 1987, and others.
16. Interview Mampondvo Kunene, Nsalitje, 29 July, 1987; Elijah Gamedze, Mgamudze, 29 July, 1987; and Venn Dlamini, Nsalitje, 29 July, 1987.
17. Sna Box File 130/7 Extension Officer memo to the Principal Secretary for agriculture on the responses of Swazi growers to cash crop cultivation in the Shiselweni District, 10 March, 1967.
18. Sna Box 98 File 145 Extension Officer to the Director for Agriculture on the problems of the rural economy particularly among some poor farmers, in the Shiselweni District, 23 October, 1958.
19. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze, 11 February, 1986 on the cause for delay among some farmers to plant cotton on their fields.
20. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Agricultural Demonstrator, Mgamudze, 11 February, 1986; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 11 February, 1986.

21. Interview Mabhalane Shongwe, Hlushwana, 11 February, 1986; Lomazala Dlamini, Hluthi, 11 February, 1986; and Mahhusha Jele, Sikhalasebhodwe, 11 February, 1986.
22. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Agricultural Demonstrator, Mgamudze, 11 February, 1986, on solving production problems which handicapped cotton growing.
23. Interview Amos Jele, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1986; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1986; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 11 February, 1986.
24. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1986; and Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 17 March, 1987.
25. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Elphas Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Motsa, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
26. Sna Box 98 File 145 Monthly report of the Agricultural Demonstrator, Matsanjeni, Shiselweni, 30 December, 1960. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
27. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
28. Disgruntled Abel Maseko, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984; Majaha Sibisi, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984 alleged that they were the victims of such an arrangement.
29. Interview Abel Maseko, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984, had to move his cotton for about 8 kilometres to the junction at Hlushwana, and the transport for all that was expensive, but since cotton was the only crop suited for production in the region he had to continue to produce it so long as he remained there.
30. Interview Abel Maseko, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 July, 1984; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 13 December, 1984; Masotsha Gwebu, Nsalitje, 13 December, 1984.
31. Interview Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 28 July, 1982; Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 28 July, 1982; Samson Shongwe, Sitilo, 28 July, 1982.
32. Interview Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 28 July, 1982; Samson Shongwe, Sitilo, 28 July, 1982; Elizari Xaba, Sitilo, 31 July, 1982.



33. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 31 July, 1982; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 31 July, 1982; Elliot Masuku, Mgamudze, 31 July, 1982; Lot Ndlovu, Mgamudze, 31 July, 1982 had used donkeys and spoke from their first hand experience.
34. Interview Elliot Masuku, Mgamudze, 31 July, 1982; Lot Ndlovu, Mgamudze, 31 July, 1982; Samuel Vilakati, Makhava, 31 July, 1982, these felt that the achievements were representative of some prosperity resulting from farming.
35. Interview Petros Nkambule, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982; David Mazibuko, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982.
36. Interview Petros Nkambule, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982; David Mazibuko, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982; and Simon Gamedze, Lukhula, 29 July, 1982, made claims that Dlamini had used his own oxen and not that the oxen were part of 'loaned' cattle to him, he did not even keep any 'loaned' cattle.
37. Interview Aaron Dlamini, Sitilo, 19 December, 1985; Msunduzi Dlamini, Nsalitje, 19 December, 1985; Malta Mgabhi, Nsalitje, 19 December, 1985; they gave testimonies about such misconduct in their area and its social impact.
38. Though this practice was becoming common in the late 1950s, and early in the 1960s, it died down later very gradually. Interview Lobhengula Shongwe, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Mzila Mamba, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Petros Sithebe, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Almon Mthembu, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985.
39. All of the old people who were interviewed held the view that arranged marriage for daughters had been part of Swazi culture, but that Swazis did not do so for every daughter, rather they arranged marriage for those whom they had confidence in not to give a bad name about their families to the in-laws either through laziness or by other untoward conduct. Even the man given the daughter had to be a well behaved and hard working somebody. Interview Mzila Mamba, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Almon Mthembu, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985, and many others supported this view.
40. Interview Mzila Mamba, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Almon Mthembu, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985; Petros Sithebe, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985.

41. Sna Box 83 File 116/3<sup>3</sup> Department of Agriculture Monthly Reports: Shiselweni District on the role of cattle in promoting farming, 10 July, 1969.
42. Sna Box 83 116/3<sup>3</sup> Department of Agriculture Monthly Reports: Shiselweni district on the role of cattle in promoting farming, 10 July, 1969; File 116/5<sup>2</sup> Quarterly Report: Lubombo district on the purchases of fertilizers through the sale of cattle, 10 November, 1962.
43. Sna Box 51 File 53/5 Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, change in operational strategies of the bank, introduction of security, August, 1972.
44. Sna Box 51 File 53/5<sup>3</sup> Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, introduction of security against loans for farmers, August, 1972.
45. Interview M.J. Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Swaziland Cotton Board, Crop Production Unit, Manzini, 25 July, 1980, 15 November, 1980; Lomahoza, Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, Headquarters, Mbabane, 11 September, 1980. He was in charge of loans for farmers. Sna Box 51 File 53/5<sup>4</sup> Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank report on the allocation of loans, 11 July, 1974.
46. Interview Petros Nkambule, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1980; Aaron Shongwe, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1980; Moses Gamedze, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1980; Petros Mahlobo, Lubuli, 30 July, 1980.
47. Interview Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Vilakati, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 20 October, 1980; Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 12 October, 1985.
48. Interview Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1980; Samuel Vilakati, Makhava, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
49. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 29 September, 1984; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 29 September, 1984; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 29 September, 1984; Josiah Vilakati Sifuntaneni, 30 September, 1984.
50. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 28 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 28 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 11 December, 1983.

51. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 30 August, 1984; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 27 October, 1984; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 27 October, 1984.
52. By 1975, each one of these farmers produced far more than 500 bales on their private land, and in a good season, they boasted of upwards of 1,000 bales or more.
53. From the experience of the farmers, Nguni cattle were not vulnerable to all the diseases that killed the cross-breeds. Interview David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980, 1 November, 1985; John Vilakati, Makhava, 1 November, 1985; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 1 November, 1985; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 16 November, 1986; and Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986.
54. Sna Box 18 File 44/9 Report of the Principal Veterinary Officer on the impact of the cattle tax on Swazi farmers- those who could not pay their cattle were not treated, 5 July, 1984; Box 18 File 45 Report of the Veterinary Department on the programme for Rural Development: the case of the Shiselweni District, 31 December, 1978.
55. Sna Box 7 File 7/37 Department of Veterinary Report on Lowveld Cattle Breeding Station and the responses of the farmers, 9 July, 1972.
56. This point was expressed by those disgruntled farmers who could not afford to pay for the medicine to dip and treat their cattle of ticks and even for the inoculation of their cattle against any diseases; Sna Box 8 File 7/44 Report of the Principal Veterinary Officer, Livestock Extension Centre: Shiselweni, 11 August, 1972.
57. Interview Lomahoza, Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, (Swazi Bank) Mbabane, Headquarters, 4 November, 1980.
58. This view was expressed by most of those farmers who still relied mostly upon oxen to plough, plant and weed their fields, Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986; Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986; Venn Dlamini, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986; Elliot Ntshangase, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986.
59. Interview Mhlushwa Nkosi, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986; Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986; Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986.

60. Sna Box 98 File 145/2 Memos of the Principal Agricultural Officer on the features of an advanced master farmer, particularly those who already articulated the effective use of machinery for ploughing, 15 August, 1972.
61. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Agricultural Demonstrator, Mgamudze, 29 November, 1985; and Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 29 November, 1985.
62. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 16 November, 1986; James Vilakati, Makhava, 16 November, 1986; Esaw Sikhosana, Makhava, 16 November, 1986.
63. This figure is based on samples made in south east Swaziland in 1985, at the beginning of the planting season. However, the figures include even calves which died young due to some negligence on the part of the farmers. Interview Venn Dlamini, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985; Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985; Elliot Ntshangase, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985.
64. Sna Box 7 File 7/37 Memos of the Veterinary Officer on progress in cattle breeding in the lowveld, 5 August, 1972; Box 8 File 7/44 Extension Officer to the Principal Officer for the Veterinary Department, 28 November, 1972.
65. Yet again this was a view expressed by some farmers whose applications had been with the Veterinary Officer in Nhlangano for more than six years while some rich farmers hardly waited for a year to be granted permission to send their cattle to the ranch. Interview Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1986; Alfeus Sithebe, Mgamudze, 29 November, 1986; Elliot Ntshangase, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1986, all these were among those who were dissatisfied with the way the applications were being processed.
66. Interview Almon Jele, Lavumisa Cooperative Ranch, 25 August, 1987.
67. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 25 August, 1987; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 16 November, 1987; and Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 16 November, 1987.
68. At least two of them did not hide the fact that the extent of the 1980 drought had brought them to their knees. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 25 November, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 25 November, 1980; corroborated by some workers

on the farms such as Samson Ndwandwe in the case of Elliot Shiba of Matsanjeni; and Abel Matse, in the case of Nkwanyana of Lavumisa.

69. Interview Aaron Dlamini, Nsalitje, 25 August, 1987; Zablun Dlamini, Matsanjeni, 25 August, 1987; Amon Mngometulu, Matsanjeni, 25 August, 1987; Samson Mdluli, Matsanjeni, 25 August, 1987; Musa Mbhamali, Lavumisa, 11 December, 1987.

70. Interview Bafana Motsa, Sitilo, 11 December, 1987; Amon Mngometulu, Matsanjeni, 11 December, 1987; Samson Mdluli, Matsanjeni, 11 December, 1987; and Musa Mbhamali, Lavumisa, 11 December, 1987.

## CHAPTER SIX

COTTON CULTIVATING ENTREPRENEURS and SOCIAL  
DIFFERENTIATION, 1955-85.

Rural areas were generally, until the post war period, associated with economic stagnation. Hence only unenterprising people were thought to reside in rural areas, and eked out a living by cultivating some crops, and even these crops were thought to be mainly food crops. It was assumed that their cash was earned through migrant labour when farming work was in recess. With the post war period came a wave of opportunities for investment and marketing, which helped to diversify the agricultural economy to include the cultivation of cash crops as well. Previously, in chapters 2, 3, and 4 we have surveyed isolated pockets of Swazi entrepreneurial activities in Manzini (Bremersdorp), Shiselweni and Lubombo. The focus now shifts to south east Swaziland, particularly Hlushwana, Matsanjeni, Makhava, Ngwavuma valley, Lavumisa, Sitilo and Nsalitje, as the latter area dominated cotton cultivation from the mid 1950s. In Swaziland, the present cotton belt had been eschewed for settlement until the 1950s, and this zone became the leading cotton producing area, particularly by Swazi small scale producers in the 1960s. It was in south east Swaziland yet again that a multiplicity of trading opportunities emerged in the 1970s, thereby leading to a burgeoning group of rural entrepreneurs. It was due to the impact of outside brokerage, upon which cotton cultivation leaned, that by the 1970s, there were already some rich rural entrepreneurs whose profits accruing from cotton were reflected in the improvement of their homes, the farming equipment, accumulation of cattle, farms and lastly the improvement of the community by providing health services, and schools. However, these developments, made the farmers more dependent on the cotton market and later on the financing organisation for the capital they needed to expand their businesses.

South east Swaziland was initially used to support a pastoral industry mainly by European settlers, and by a trickle of Swazi cattle-keepers. The area had concentrated mainly on cattle-rearing until the 1950s when cotton production was started.<sup>1</sup> This pastoral economy of the region had been made necessary by the poverty of the means of communication, and this disposition led to the absence of marketing facilities particularly for agricultural commodities. This pastoral economic monopoly was broken into by Ralli Brothers who set up a cotton gin at Magudu. Due to the meagre local supply made worse by the competition for the commodity there, the company expanded across the border to Swaziland. Oral evidence alleges that in 1950, only one EurAfrican grower sold the crop to the company while Swazi growers only responded to the demand on the third season of cotton production in the area in the 1950s, and these responses occurred on EurAfrican private farms, the details of which are in chapter four.

Earlier Swazi entrepreneurs operated under more unfavourable conditions than their successors of south east Swaziland who began to grow cotton in the 1950s. First, the climatic conditions were not very suitable mainly in Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun and the neighbouring areas. Manzini was the only suitable area when compared with the former, but still the climate of south east Swaziland proved more congenial than that of Manzini. Second, the ecology was also less suitable when one considers the texture of the soils which supported cotton in the 1950s in south east Swaziland. Generally, the soils of Hlathikhulu and Goedgegun and some parts of Manzini were loose and sandy and therefore less fertile to support cotton unless chemical fertilizers were applied abundantly to the soils to step up output. On the other hand, south east Swaziland was endowed with a congenial climate which was warm enough to encourage fast growth. And the soils were loamy dark which retained moisture for considerably long periods of time. Also due to the thick undergrowth and forests, soil fertility was high and supported healthy crops whose output was also handsome. Very little fertilizers were applied to the soils at first, and even when not

applied, the crops were still fresh and healthy.<sup>2</sup> In short, the expenses on inputs incurred by entrepreneurs of the 1950s in south east Swaziland were minimal compared with those of their forebears who had grown cotton in less congenial zones of the territory. But it seems natural factors were interdependent with man-made ones such as the Schultz factors of production.<sup>3</sup>

It was not long after Swazi growers sold their cotton directly to Magudu that the company there began to meet their production needs partially. Ralli Brothers provided the growers with inputs at low costs, and these inputs went along with a field officer who imparted some rudimentary knowledge on the use of the inputs. These factors were not available to the entrepreneurs in the 1920s, and when they became available in the 1930s, technical advice remained poor particularly because the growers were far from the administrative centres where offices of the department of agriculture were found. Poor communication was the main obstacle even in the 1950s for south east Swaziland, but Ralli Brothers filled the gap. Earlier Swazi growers did not have access to these broker facilities because there were few brokers and those did not afford credit facilities.<sup>4</sup> Yet another factor was that there was very little competition among brokers to force them to induce growers to rally behind them. In the 1950s, competition created the need to make available most of these facilities in order to forestall rivals, in the case of Ralli Brothers.<sup>5</sup> Competition improved the conditions of production for the growers hence there was more Swazi participation in cotton cultivation in the 1950s compared to the earlier period. And yet another very influential variable in favour of Swazi growers in the 1950s was that growers could sell their crop and get the money on the same day while earlier growers, particularly those who sold through the South African buses, received their money after some long time of waiting for it. Transport was available to facilitate the transactions and the benefits from the trade were made more concrete and immediate by the availability of the means of transport. In 1959, when Clark opened a market at Phongolo, which was much closer than Magudu, growers could even organise their own transport because it was still cheaper to pool their crop and take it there



themselves at the opportune time.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, earlier growers particularly those in Shiselweni, had no contact with cotton markets except for those which were provided by settlers such as Language and Cheales. But even the latter two served as agents for some companies in South Africa because they were denied permission to open trading grounds like gins in Swaziland.<sup>7</sup>

For Manzini growers in the 1920s and 1930s the availability and proximity of the Power Company gin at Bremersdorp then, did not make them any better than their distant counterparts save only in a few instances such as Matsafeni.<sup>8</sup> These few isolated exceptions were made by the promising cotton output of growers but on the whole growers had to find their own transport to send cotton to the gin. Consequently, very little stimulus to the production of more cotton was provided by the nearness of the market. The company had also failed to stimulate interest in the growers by creating credit facilities and transport, something which explains the insignificance of cotton cultivation even among the promising few.

Social differentiation became noticeable by 1955 in south east Swaziland, particularly when growers like Samuel Nsibande and Amos Matse pioneered the tractorisation of agricultural farming.<sup>9</sup> After these farmers acquired the tractor they invested its services appropriately to raise more money to multiply their areas of investment. These areas of investment assumed the form of cattle, the purchase of tractor wagons. These facilities were hired out for cash, and two years later the growers were able to add one more tractor and separated so that each could use his tractor independently of the other and bear all the maintenance expenses accordingly without the assistance of the other. Individual ownership of tractors yielded profits for the growers at different rates, and Samuel became more successful than Amos. The factors which facilitated the multiplication of Samuel's profits while Amos's stagnated were mainly technical because both growers cultivated cotton in Swazi Areas where access to the land was gained without any charge. Samuel leaned more upon his

erstwhile European friend where he received technical help to maintain his tractor, to maximise output on his cotton fields by using the inputs appropriately. On the other hand, Amos did not have such contact and his approach to the problems he encountered was a trial and error, and as such his cotton output was low due to the poor mechanical maintenance of his tractor.<sup>10</sup>

Contacts with European settlers have formed some bedrock for the establishment of rural entrepreneurial activities as experienced even in chapter 2. Iliffe has also given cognizance of this factor in his study of cash crop production and social change in Tanganyika.<sup>11</sup> It is important though to note that one does not suggest that Swazi growers were incapable of standing on their own, rather this illustration shows the importance of exploiting fruitfully long-standing experience in the activity prosecuted. European settlers already had a long history of involvement in commerce, and some of them had come from Natal where they had some contact with cash crop production hence the relevant technical advice they offered their Swazi clients. Incidentally, Samuel's European friend had migrated from Natal and had once been involved in cotton production but after arrival in Swaziland, where the market was remote, his interests shifted remarkably to pastoralism.<sup>12</sup>

The difference between those who exploited European contacts in the 1950s and those of the earlier decades of the 20th century is that while in the earlier decades Europeans were bent upon keeping the Swazi as their dependants in order to use them to produce cotton to sell to them cheaply to boost their meagre output, those who emerged after the Second World War, guided the Swazi to become independent in due course. In short, the technical investment was a long term one and those who maintained these contacts and exploited them to maximum benefit realised progress in their business as the cases of Samuel and others will show. In 1957, two years after Samuel and Amos had purchased their tractor, Albion Matse, Simon Sihlongonyane, and others followed suit, but made very little progress mainly because they lacked the know-how and the technical guidance

which Samuel had enjoyed.<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that entrepreneurial skills were developed effectively with appropriate guidance, and wherever the latter lacked some promising entrepreneurs fell by the way side. Take for instance, Albert Vilakati, Petros Dlodlu, David Dlamini, Josiah Vilakati, Deacon Nsibande, and others who were pioneers and diligent growers but due to failure to secure technical advice and credit facilities they were pushed to the background like the Swazi entrepreneurs of the earlier decades.<sup>14</sup> One should not forget the technical support given by Ralli Brothers, but its weakness lay in the gross inequality which punctuated its distribution of the technical advice and credit facilities to various needy growers. This unequal credit and technical distribution was determined by the volume of trade undertaken between each grower and the company. Small scale and less progressive growers received little or no assistance, save in those areas where Ralli Brothers' monopoly was threatened by other rivals like Clark.<sup>15</sup>

Yet another demoralising handicap was the lack of education for the growers, something that the state began to provide in the mid 1960s, as the discussion below will indicate. Lack of education in relevant areas of production took too long to materialise in spite of the government's support for cotton production from the beginning of the 1950s. In the case of south east Swaziland state intervention to provide the necessary requisites for the industry to stabilise remained wanting due to the poverty of the means of communication such as roads and transport for the agricultural officers. The area was visited very occasionally and even then travelling within the area was very treacherous and left some farmers unattended. Difficulty in travelling posed another problem and that was failure on the part of the agricultural officers to spread technical knowledge to those who needed it at the right time, and this handicap was exacerbated by the fact that growers were scattered all over the area which made the distance between different growers enormous particularly for a pedestrian demonstrator. Even Ralli Brothers' field officer found it hard to reach every grower who was engaged in cotton cultivation because he was also a pedestrian. It has, however, transpired in



the discussion above that in certain instances this gap was filled by some European farmers, while those who did not have that contact shared their problems among themselves particularly with progressive cultivators. But in most cases it was the blind leading his kind hence some of the growers deteriorated to the point where they found it hard to recover. Similar developments were noted by J. Iliffe in his study of cash crop production by the Chagga of Tanganyika where their contact with Europeans stimulated interest in trade.<sup>16</sup>

After Ralli Brothers stopped promoting cotton growing in south east Swaziland between 1957 and 1958, Clark took over and promoted Swazi cotton growing. Initially they operated from Magudu, but in 1959, a year after they (Clark) succeeded Ralli Brothers, they transferred their gin to Phongolo.<sup>17</sup> The gin at Phongolo was about 20 kilometres from Matsanjeni-Hlushwana and less than 7 kilometres from Nsalitje. The nearness of the market enabled those farmers who owned ox-wagons and tractor wagons to transport their cotton there instead of waiting for company transport. In short, some growers could sell their crop when they wanted to, and received their money on the spot. The same applied even to the transportation of inputs like seeds and fertilizers. The company had also encouraged growers to visit the gin whenever they had technical problems which required assistance instead of waiting for the field officer who visited the area at his convenience.<sup>18</sup> When the field officer visited the areas late growers were involved in unnecessary losses, and to avoid this they visited the gin themselves. In the same year, 1959, the Swaziland Milling Company established itself in the country and took interest in promoting the farming methods of growers in an effort to boost output mainly in maize.<sup>19</sup> But in the course of improving the farming skills of the cultivators, the company found itself promoting cotton cultivation as well since the skills required to produce maize were the same with those required to cultivate cotton. With these developments, the ministry of agriculture was enjoined to extend its extension services even to distant growers, as far south as south east Swaziland. That was part of the package clinched to secure the finance from the company for extension

services. Roads were improved to facilitate travelling to those areas which were affected by these projects. In the latter area, which forms the focus of the study, farmers who partook of the schemes were Elliot Shiba, Johannes Nzuza, Samuel Shongwe, Albert Vilakati, David Dlamini, Josiah Vilakati, Petros Dlodlu to name a few. The selection of these farmers was made on the basis of their progress in farming and this information was solicited from various demonstrators familiar with the farmers. Initially free inputs were made available to the farmers to grow maize.<sup>20</sup>

This financial assistance was maintained until 1961, when a Crop Scheme was started and supported by the SMC along with the ministry of agriculture. The objective of the scheme was to improve the farming methods of the cultivators by raising output per acre of the crops they grew particularly maize and cotton, crops that had become the main backbone of the common man's rural farming economy.<sup>21</sup> In short, the scheme aimed to turn farmers into intensive cultivators as opposed to extensive ones. There were three stages of training through which growers were supposed to pass before they could be certified to have met the requirements of the programme, and these requirements necessitated grouping the growers according to their already acquired skills. However, those whose farming methods were still backward started with the first stage and progressed gradually to the last one. The first stage was known as the pupil farmer, followed by the advanced farmer, and finally the master farmer which was the target of the training.<sup>22</sup> To facilitate the administration of this scheme, there were a few registered farmers who joined the competition and were given free inputs. The best farmer, judged according to his articulation of all the basics of the lessons and the quality of the crops grown won the tournament, whose prize was a bicycle. To arrive at the decision as to who was the best farmer, those who monitored the scheme watched all the stages including the tilling of the soil, planting, weeding and spraying of the crop and finally the mature stage to know whose crop was of high quality. But it is important to note that the package that was sold to the pupil students included seeds, fertilizers and insecticides among the inputs which the

growers received.<sup>23</sup> Administrators of the scheme had assumed that the pupil farmers already owned the necessary farming technology and yet some did not. It was in 1962, a year after the project had been instituted that Elliot Shiba, who had been farming for three years, approached Ida Potgieter to borrow a sprayer, however, some of the inputs like the sprayer were provided by the sponsors in the mid 1960s.<sup>24</sup>

The scheme was continued until 1971, by which time it had expanded to many areas in the country and covered mainly maize, cotton and tobacco. It is important to note at this point that the scheme was not meant to spoon-feed the growers with all the necessary requisites to improve output in their farming economy. This is made clear by the scheme's provision of some inputs while others were left to the grower to provide, as the case of Elliot Shiba has indicated. Elliot had begun to grow cotton in 1959 at the same time as Johannes Nzuzza, and the two had cooperated on almost every level of their farming.<sup>25</sup> In 1962, when Elliot borrowed a sprayer from Ida, he shared the services of the equipment with Johannes Nzuzza to promote their farming. Elliot forged some cooperation at this level with other colleagues such as Philemon Nxumalo, Abel Nxumalo, Samuel Vilane and others all of whom were in his area, Matsanjeni. However, the scheme benefited the farmers differently in spite of the equal opportunities they were given by its administrators. By the end of 1963, Elliot, Johannes, Philemon, and Abel had bought other farming equipment to expand and improve their cotton cultivation and other crops. But it transpired during field studies that such equipment were hired out on a rental by some farmers who had been lent by European owners.<sup>26</sup> The owners of these inputs had avoided charging rental while custodians were paid in cash for renting out the equipment, an indication that some farmers took advantage of any available opportunity to accumulate capital hence the rapid improvement of their farming technology and accumulation of property which later facilitated social differentiation.<sup>27</sup>

To complement the pupil/advanced/master farmer programme, research was undertaken by the ministry of agriculture into the problems which hampered the improvement of agricultural farming particularly in SNL, where Swazi growers carried out their rural economic activities. At this point, the ministry was aware of the obstacles which militated against optimum maize production but were not sure of those which hampered progress in cotton cultivation, one of the crops which promised to be an alternative source of a livelihood to migration.<sup>28</sup> It was in 1963 that the ministry mounted a programme whose objective was to create the Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative Union to coordinate the already existent cooperatives and also go ahead to form more of such societies. These two programmes: research into problems which hampered Swazi interest in cotton, and the creation of cooperatives were thought of as being complementary.<sup>29</sup> To facilitate the prosecution of these projects a Cotton Improvement Fund was created by the Colonial State and administered through the ministry of agriculture. The fund was created to finance activities which were concerned mainly with the improvement of cotton cultivation.<sup>30</sup>

As part of the recommendations of the research carried out by the ministry of agriculture, it was agreed in 1963 that an institution be set up to train extension officers and even provide short courses to cotton growers. The objective was to improve the farming methods of the Swazi in order to boost the output in the long run. According to the plans of the state there was supposed to be some training centre to benefit farming by training extension officers and provide short courses for those farmers who were ready to partake of such programmes. Consequently, in 1964 the Swaziland Agricultural College and University Centre (SACUC) was opened at Luyengo,<sup>31</sup> the present agricultural campus of the University of Swaziland. SACUC went a long way towards meeting the needs of cotton growers and those of other cultivators. The provision of education preceded that of credit facilities because the state felt that unless the obstacles to farming had been made clear to the farmers, credit facilities



would not help boost the output in any of the crops grown. It was felt that education should come first where the question of appropriate investment of resources would be given attention so that when finance was finally provided waste would be minimised. The education which was offered at Luyengo was aimed to provide a basis even for the formation of cooperatives and the way in which these would function. Regarding cooperatives, farmers were enlightened on the benefits of a cooperative spirit and the various problems which got solved in farming through cooperation.<sup>32</sup> After each training session demonstrators were dispatched to those areas where farmers who attended the training grew cotton and other crops to monitor the progress and farmer adherence to the principles of farming. But it has to be mentioned that in the majority of cases demonstrators did not reach every student farmer in time and in certain cases some farmers were not visited due to the poverty of the roads and transport.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to monitoring the progress of the farmers, demonstrators also distributed cotton seeds, and this aspect of the development of cotton cultivation was resumed in 1964 after it had been pushed to the background for reasons unsubstantiated upon in the 1950s. The ministry of agriculture, in conjunction with the Cotton Advisory Committee, formed in 1958, in the same year the Malkerns Research Station was formed, had assumed the responsibility of seed distribution and gave technical advice to the growers.<sup>34</sup> However, the Advisory Committee remained ineffective due to lack of finance to carry out its advisory duties to cotton growers until 1964, when it began to take active interest in it with the support of the college.<sup>35</sup> It became clear that the Central Producers' Cooperative Union (CCU); and the other organisations set up to promote cotton and other crops could not effect any positive change due to the lack of credit facilities especially for Swazi growers. The Cotton Research Committee, who continued to release their recommendations to the Colonial State on the methods to be adopted in order to improve cotton production in the SNL, also emphasised the need for credit facilities specifically for Swazi growers whose business on SNL did

not qualify them for loans with any of the merchant banks due to lack of security.<sup>36</sup> In fact, even though the Cotton Research Committee was concerned with cotton production and the problems which militated against it, the Colonial State on the other hand aimed to give attention to all crops grown by small scale farmers and to commercialise the rural agricultural economy in general. The other crop which the state wanted to support to raise its output was maize, and this concern was made unavoidable both by the falling output and the amount of maize the SMC imported from South Africa each year to offset local food deficits.<sup>37</sup>

The recommendation of the Cotton Research Committee to establish a bank to finance Swazi entrepreneurial activities was given some serious consideration by the Colonial State to the extent that on 28 February, 1964 a committee consisting of four members met to deliberate on the issue.<sup>38</sup> Its chairman was P. Ballenden and his committee drew up a very broad outline on the functions of the would-be bank. The committee suggested that the bank be called Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank and the name was later changed to Swazi Bank, to agree with the main objective of its formation. The Swazi Bank was initially formed to meet the needs of Swazi growers, and the change of name was effected after independence which was in 1968. The committee recommended that the bank should create first, a housing credit where emphasis was laid on loans for high density urban housing and where possible be made to urban authorities for the purpose of housing. Second, agricultural credit where priority was given to short and medium-long term development credit for title deed farmers. It was also emphasised that the cooperative movement which was already one year old then should be expanded and short term loans made to these cooperatives. Third, it should make popular the idea of savings by opening up a savings account department in the bank. Fourth, at a later stage the bank could lend money to a statutory industrial development corporation.<sup>39</sup>

As regards credit for agriculture, the types of credit required were "Annual crop credit for Swazi farmers; medium term credit

for farmers; long-term credit for Swazi high value crop production schemes; annual crop credits could be extended to title deed farmers when sufficient funds are available; medium-long term development credit for non-government settlement schemes; medium-long term development credit for title deed farmers; and short-term credit for the holding grounds".<sup>40</sup> According to the recommendations of the committee the bank was supposed to be launched towards the end of 1964 with an initial government loan of R400,000 for the years 1964/65 and 1965/66, and that supplementary loans be sought from the funds of the Agency for International Development to enable the bank to campaign for recognition and support from potential customers. The date recommended for the inauguration came to fruition and the bank was launched at the end of 1964/65.<sup>41</sup> It was hoped that the bank should be able to stand on its own after the initial financial government support had been secured. In its initial stages of functioning the bank made small loans to farmers without asking for any security until 1969, when it became clear that some farmers did not appreciate the bank's gesture of alleviating their problem of lack of credit facilities by deliberately avoiding to settle their loan accounts on agreed dates. But it is important to note that loans were not made to cotton growers only but even to those who cultivated maize. At that point it was agreed that crops would be held as security against the loans.<sup>42</sup> But this blunder was soon brought to the notice of the bank because when crops were destroyed by adverse weather conditions there would not be anything for the bank to claim against the loan from the growers. As a follow-up on this issue of loan and security yet another programme was introduced in 1969, the Crop Production Scheme, mounted with the objective to test the reliability, and ability of the farmers to settle their loans at agreed times.<sup>43</sup>

It is crucial to note that Cotona Cotton Ginning Company who established themselves at Matsapha Industrial Site in 1965,<sup>44</sup> CCU and other organisations such as the Cotton Advisory Committee all cooperated with the bank. In fact, the bank coordinated the activities of the these organisations in that for their operation, which centred on farming, they relied on the bank

for finance.<sup>45</sup> At the beginning, the bank did not want farmers to approach them on an individual basis, but encouraged them to register with local cooperatives, obtain membership tickets which they used to obtain credit with which they sought inputs from retailers or cooperatives. All purchase orders were endorsed by cooperative leaders to be valid, and this qualification was meant to reinforce a cooperative spirit among the farmers. Membership of every farmer with a local cooperative was helpful to the bank to track down those farmers who avoided repayments.<sup>46</sup> But what is important for purposes of the study at this point is to show how farmers benefited from these developments to the point that some of them became rich, the other aspects of the history of cooperatives have been given attention in chapter seven.

Insistence on grower membership with a local cooperative to qualify for a licence to secure credit for his farming applied only to small scale farmers on SNL, while Swazi title deed farmers did not require such membership. However, only by the late 1960s did Swazi farmers begin to buy title deed land in south east Swaziland. But even before title deed farms were purchased, some Swazi growers on SNL already produced upwards of 100 bales each per season.<sup>47</sup> Cotona were interested to attract such farmers to them by offering better credit facilities than their small scale counterparts received. For instance, even transport was provided for a big output. Instead of leaving the onus with the farmers, Cotona took the trouble to monitor every stage of the production until harvest time. This initiative was made necessary by the presence of Clark and Company at Phongolo who were feared by Cotona because of the competition they presented to them for the cotton grown in the lowveld. The two had a long history of rivalry for cotton producers in South Africa<sup>48</sup> and Swaziland (see p.60). By the late 1960s Clark were offering these facilities but to group farmers in each region instead of dealing directly with productive individual farmers. The farmers who attracted Cotona in south east Swaziland were Samuel Nsibande, Elliot Shiba, Johannes Nzuza, Samuel Shongwe, Amos Matse, Aaron Matse, Simon Sihlongonyane and others.<sup>49</sup> In order to undercut their rival,

Cotona went beyond just offering simple inputs like seeds, fertilizers and insecticides to even purchase tractors and other farming equipment for their client farmers. This panicky conduct by the broker was exploited by some farmers to improve themselves by seeking more finance to expand their cotton production.<sup>50</sup>

Broker competition for Swazi cotton in south east Swaziland after 1965 when Cotona established their gin at Matsapha, served as a strong factor to jerk up cotton output, and expand the area under cultivation in that region. These developments opened up a new chapter in the history of cotton cultivation in Swaziland as a whole and more particularly for the south eastern part of the country. It was in the period post 1965 that even those cultivators who had begun to grow cotton in 1959 and early in the 1960s, began to acquire more improved farming technology like tractors. And it was also in the latter part of the 1960s that farmers in Matsanjeni revived their defunct cooperative, the Matsanjeni Cotton Famers' Cooperative Union,<sup>51</sup> whose history is treated in chapter seven below. All these developments only occurred when the level of production for the farmers became noticeable and commanded some bargaining power however limited it might have been in other aspects. But these developments were utilized by farmers for their benefit though on different levels since while some of them gained materially others did not, hence the emergence of a group of rich farmers along with those who were still poor. It is also important to note that even government organisations or committees set up to promote the improvement of the rural economy displayed some gross inequality in the technical assistance they extended to the farmers. In fact, even demonstrators paid more attention to already developed and progressive farmers at the expense of those who were still very poor and whose farming methods were backward. This unfair distribution of the technical advice was reported to have been caused by the fact that rich farmers provided refreshments and food for the demonstrators each time they visited their fields. On the other hand poor farmers could not afford such refreshments, and as a result their farming methods were neglected. In short, it

would be wrong to blame brokers only for the divided attention their demonstrators gave to the farmers because even government ones followed on the footsteps of the former.<sup>52</sup>

In 1969, a year after Swaziland became independent the government set up a Seed Production Programme and attached it to the Malkerns Research Station, which was not far from SACUC. The scheme did not necessarily specialise in cotton but also gave special attention to foodcrops, particularly maize which was already the staple crop. Before 1969, seeds for all crops grown in the country were imported from South Africa where they were produced. But these seed imports displayed glaring shortcomings in that they were not suited to the different types of soils where both maize and cotton were grown, nor had their producers taken into account the different climatic zones and conditions under which the crops were grown. These seeds also required specific fertilizers which were both suitable for the support of those seeds or varieties plus the texture of the soils where the crops were grown.<sup>53</sup> To know which region was suited to which fertilizer took a long time to achieve for the ministry of agriculture and advise the farmers accordingly, and the farmers who mastered this aspect first were those who attended short courses in farming at Luyengo. It was during these courses that farmers' attention was drawn to this aspect of farming in so far as it affected both maize and cotton. In a sense these programmes were complementary to one another. Even though the administration showed awareness of the problems which militated against farming in general, the main obstacle to the prosecution of the recommendations of the Research Committee was lack of transport facilities for demonstrators and extension officers in most of the districts as already pointed out above.

However, some of these problems, particularly those which concerned the want of technical advice were alleviated by the institutionalisation of the Cotton Board in 1968, the same year that Swaziland became independent. The Cotton Board consisted of three main standing officers, namely; the Chief Executive Officer, the Technical officer, and the Secretary.<sup>54</sup> There were other

members who were invited each time there was a meeting organised by the board to discuss problems of cotton production. The Cotton Board succeeded the Cotton Advisory Committee which had been formed in 1958 to look into the issues which centred on cotton production and made recommendations to the ministry of agriculture. The Cotton Board cooperated with the Cotton Research Committee and the former made some input into the work of the committee by recommending the types of varieties they thought would be suitable to various regions. Their recommendations also had some bearing on the output capacity of each variety along with the capacity to resist certain diseases, and their recommendations were based on the observations of their technical officer. At the centre of all these activities was the ministry of agriculture which coordinated their work. But it is crucial to note that in south east Swaziland, which was more than 150 and 200 kilometres away from Manzini and Mbabane respectively, where decisions were taken at the offices of the ministry, the dissemination of technical knowledge was very piecemeal and difficult.<sup>55</sup> The roads which linked these urban areas to the cotton area were in a bad condition and had been neglected in terms of maintenance particularly in summer when rains fell frequently, and farmers needed the technical advice more than because that was the planting season. And whenever visitations were finally made very few farmers were given attention which made some growers find their own solutions to the production problems they encountered. <sup>56</sup>

When the Seed Production Unit was introduced in 1969, it was followed very closely by a Cotton Production Scheme which was also implemented in the same year. However, in that year was also begun a maize growing campaign, and both schemes aimed to introduce new seed varieties which were suited to different ecological and climatic conditions. The Cotton Board coordinated this scheme which was financed with a fund from the United Kingdom but administered by the Swazi Bank. For the Swazi Bank this was an opportune time to familiarise Swazi farmers with the regulations involved in loan allocations, particularly the question of interest which fluctuated and how the

fluctuation took place, the need to honour an agreement entered into between the two parties. Farmers who participated in the scheme were selected from region to region but from diligent farmers. Most of the farmers who were selected came from Manzini because of the nearness of the area to the offices of the Cotton Board, Cotton Research Committee, the Bank and the ministry of agriculture. A few were selected from south east Swaziland, and those who came from the latter region were among those whose homes and fields lay close to the road to facilitate the movement of those who monitored the work.<sup>57</sup>

The Cotton Board and the ministry of agriculture were charged with the administration aspect to help facilitate the improvement of grower entrepreneurial skills in the long run. Cotton had already become one of the cash earners in south east Swaziland in SNL and the promotion of its cultivation was top on the government's agenda for the economic development of rural farming. However, it was difficult for the administrators of the scheme to convince the Swazi growers to give more attention to cotton than to maize especially in those areas which were less suited to maize.<sup>58</sup> The scheme was a dismal failure in Manzini while in south east Swaziland there were farmers who made good use of the opportunity by acquiring the necessary know-how of cotton growing and to use the credit facilities. Most of those who had been selected to partake of the scheme came from already productive farmers, which was an indication of the project's weakness because it was supposed to develop the methods of those farmers who still faced production problems. Productive farmers were drawn from cultivators such as Samuel Shongwe, Jerome Mhlungu, Elliot Shiba, David Xaba, Johannes Nzuza, to name a few who benefited hence their farming methods and cotton output improved.<sup>59</sup>

The receptive attitudes of farmers in south east Swaziland was accounted for by the high demand for cotton there presented by Clark and Cotona. Yet another explanation was that the area was less suited to maize, a crop which had made farmers in Manzini less willing to reduce its production in favour of cotton



because the climate was more suited to maize production than to cotton.<sup>60</sup> It was in south east Swaziland that growers who were involved in the scheme were also supported by Cotona with farming technology such as improved sprayers than the old-fashioned type they had used. Some of the farmers purchased new tractors because those which they owned were already old and not effective enough to facilitate expansion in their farming. It is also important to consider the price levels of the crop as one of the influential factors in making the attitudes of farmers there more receptive to the ideals of the Cotton Scheme than other areas in Manzini and elsewhere. For instance, in 1967 prices per kg of seed cotton doubled, and that trend continued in subsequent years as shown in Table D. The positive attitude of the administration towards the rising demand for cotton was reflected in the support it gave to the cotton production programmes and its attempts to form those relevant instruments which supported the schemes. For farmers, the real incentive to step up production was the price rise in 1967 which had doubled that of 1967 in 1968.<sup>61</sup> It is important to note that brokers did not separate output from quality from the price of seed cotton per kg. Cotton of a low grade was given a low price and in order to get an income correspondent with the output farmers produced a good quality crop which also maintained a good reputation with the brokers.<sup>62</sup>

The rise in the cotton price and the availability of credit facilities, enabled some farmers like Samuel Nsibande to purchase private farms at the end of the 1960s.<sup>63</sup> Cotton production on SNL suffered a number of limitations in that the amount of land assigned each farmer was determined by the chief and his administrative officers. Its expansion was justified by the expanded food demands of each family but cotton growers had found it hard to convince chiefs for more land, more than the average amount allotted to growers with big families. To offset this land deficit, for the sake of meeting the market demand for cotton, some farmers began to purchase title deed land.<sup>64</sup> Most European farmers at the close of the 1960s were looking for buyers for their farms since they were leaving the country and returning to South Africa. European farmers disapproved of

working under an African government due to racist justifications in the majority of cases. However, the departure of these farmers was a blessing to the progressive Swazi growers because the terms upon which they purchased the farms were favourable to the weak financial position of the potential buyers. The local market for these farms was very poor due to their unfavourable geographical location: they lay in the lowveld where there were no big rivers to facilitate irrigation farming. In short, farming in the area was entirely dependent upon rainfall which meant that investment in them represented some major loss for buyers unless whosoever bought them invested in pastoral farming which flourished and has remained so even to this day.<sup>65</sup> The only people who were willing to purchase the farms were Swazi cotton growers most of whom could not afford hard cash, and in order to raise cash for the farms they sought financial backing from the Swazi Bank, while some of the finance came from Cotona, a local broker who had some considerable vested interest in cotton.<sup>66</sup>

At the beginning of the 1970s, growers who provided a fertile ground for the Cotton Scheme, were those who already produced about 50 bales and more per season per grower. These were Samuel Nsibande, Elliot Shiba, Johannes Nzuza, Philemon Nxumalo, Abel Nxumalo, Amos Matse, Aaron Matse, Albion Mbhamali, and others. The increased number of tractors was also correspondent with the amount of cotton produced per season per grower. For instance, there were 357 tractors in Swaziland in 1971 and these were owned by Swazi growers, and in 1972 the number had increased to 364. In Shiselweni alone there were 139, Lubombo 91, Manzini 71, Hhohho 63, and south east Swaziland fell under Shiselweni.<sup>67</sup> In the latter region, which grew mainly cotton, farmers like Elliot Shiba, Samuel Nsibande, Johannes Nzuza, and Amos Matse already owned between two and three tractors each by 1971. Nsibande already owned title deed land in that year, and there was more land to be cultivated and grown with cotton by 1971 hence his decision to buy three tractors.<sup>68</sup>

It is important to note that by the 1970s, at a time when the wars of liberation gained momentum in Mozambique, more

refugees from there entered the country, some legally while others did so illegally. Those who entered the country unlawfully sought asylum with some farmers in the lowveld where they hoped to hide away from the law and avoid arrests by the police. This development occurred at a time when the demand for labour was high on the cotton fields. Family and other hired local labour supplies were inadequate in the face of the expanded extent of cotton cultivation. Child labour was only available on weekends, during public and school vacation holidays when children, looking for school fees, sold their labour to the farmers but again that was too casual to meet the rising demand.<sup>69</sup> It is difficult though to say which group of refugees were more exposed to exploitation by the farmers between unlawful ones and those who entered the country legally. Unlawful refugees were not registered in the country, did not reside in refugee camps located at Ndzevane in the Big Bend area. Unregistered refugees could not seek the protection of the state against exploitation by farmers because they were unknown in the country, and registration was deliberately avoided because they disapproved of living in camps.<sup>70</sup>

The question of labour cannot be underplayed at this time particularly among the rich farmers who possessed most of the factors which facilitated its attraction to meet the market demand of cotton. Some of these factors were the adequate supply of food, clothes and shelter all of which were required desperately by the refugees. Some of the farmers already operated shops or trading stores which were construed by some of the refugees to be signs of richness. According to oral evidence food was supplied adequately to attract more refugees to come and seek protection. On those farms where shelter was very poor few refugees were attracted. Most of the farmers provided just the above facilities while others added pocket money at the end of each month to attract more from those who did not provide these to hold the labour from leaving. This development became one of the inducements for labour in 1972, and later it was expanded to wages. Most of the refugees appreciated this gesture, and because there was no control over their movements in the area

particularly on weekends, they met and shared their experiences with their different masters. Free movement served as a deterrent and was regretted later by those farmers who were reluctant to pay wages to their labourers in addition to food and the other things. The result was that frugal farmers lost their labour to those who already paid wages.<sup>71</sup>

Some of the illegal refugees met often with the legal group housed at Ndzevane and shared their financial progress from working on cotton fields. Later there was some piecemeal addition of refugee labour on some of these farms, particularly those which were easy to visit by means of public transport from the refugee camp. At Lavumisa, for instance, Johannes Nkwanyana, who began to grow cotton in the early 1970s, was one of those lucky farmers who received this labour.<sup>72</sup> Elliot Shiba at Matsanjeni, Johannes Nzuza and others received a few stray aways because they were far from the main road where the public buses from Ndzevane ran. To avoid confrontation with the local Royal Police, farmers had to register these strays so that if anything went wrong they should be held responsible but since most of the farmers wanted to avoid such responsibility they decided not to register any strays and that was a good excuse for paying the workers low wages. But rich farmers succeeded to attract more of these workers, and in cases where local accommodation was lacking, arrangements were made to accommodate them temporarily during the week and they were driven to the camps on weekends. While this latter conduct eased accommodation problems, some refugees frowned upon it and went to look for work with those farmers who did not send them to the camps. In fact, most of the refugees did not bother much about the poverty of the accommodation because they thought it was the better of the two evils; camp conditions and poor shelter on the farms. To some the camp was similar to a prison where there was restriction of movement and punishment for the infringement of the regulations governing their accommodation there. On the farms these restrictions were non-existent. However, on the part of those farmers who insisted on driving the labour back to the camp the main problem was not only losing the labour to other farmers

but the expense involved in the transportation due to the long distance which was more than 60 kilometres each way and the poor condition of the road which linked the cotton area to the camp.<sup>73</sup>

The implications of this labour competition were considerably serious for the poor farmers. Very few refugees sought asylum with poor farmers due to lack of entertainments and low wages, compared to rich farmers whose wages and conditions of service were better. However, in spite of these shortcomings, some refugees found asylum with these poor growers. Aware of their vulnerability of losing labour to rich farmers, poor farmers, who also wanted to improve and expand cotton cultivation due to the revived price, already at 19 cents per kg of seed cotton by 1972, offered attractive conditions to keep the labour.<sup>74</sup> Refugees were treated like family members by working along with their hosts, had access to all the benefits which were enjoyed by the patrons. Some of the refugees were even given Swazi names and called by the surnames of their patrons to protect them against any suspicion by political authorities like chiefs. But the latter were easily bribed to register the refugees as nationals and members of their chiefdoms. Registration with chiefdoms as nationals allowed these people access to a number of facilities such as public education which only nationals were entitled to.<sup>75</sup> Young men of school going age, who had been attending school in their country at the time of their departure were often supported to receive education, worked on weekends and public holidays or school vacation but even then along with members of the families who provided them asylum. But some of these Mozambicans exploited available opportunities to get whatever they wanted and left, while others remained incorporated members of those families with whom they lived. In some cases school-going young men, remained with their patrons until they attained the desired level of education when they moved to seek employment anywhere they chose in the country since they were already considered nationals. Most of them already spoke *Siswati* well (the national language) and were not discriminated against nor debarred from getting employment.

And since some of the rich farmers already operated shops, restaurants, bottle stores, garages and workshops, where these young men were employed, poor farmers who had brought up some of the opportunists were deserted in favour of rich farmers who offered relatively better wages. Whichever way one looks at it the plight of poor farmers was exacerbated by the failure to attract and hold labour in adequate supplies. There were exceptions, however, where some educated refugees did not desert their patrons. In those instances where they went to look for work in urban places permission was sought and granted by the poor patrons.<sup>76</sup>

It was in the mid 1970s that some of the rich farmers opened up garages in the lowveld to provide mechanical repairs to cars, tractors and trucks in the remote cotton area. Most of the Mozambican refugees boasted of a variety of skills which involved mechanics, bricklaying, plumbing, and the like. In addition to farming and the operation of stores and butcheries, rich entrepreneurs also added garages and these were Elliot Shiba, Johannes Nkwanyana, Mbhavumane Ntshangase, to name a few. At these garages, as mentioned above, some of the skilled refugees were employed to run the business but at a very low cost. The need for the establishment of these additional businesses was created by the expanded extent of cotton cultivation made necessary by the elastic demand.<sup>77</sup> The elastic demand for cotton was also reflected in the price levels of the crop per kg, and the levels are clearly reflected in Table D. By 1973, the price of seed cotton per kg was already at 32 cents and 36 cents in 1974. Even though it dropped down to 25 cents in 1975, in 1976 it rose again to 35 cents.<sup>78</sup> Most of tractor maintenance which Shiba and Nkwanyana offered at their garages was concerned more with panel beating tractor dents than with changing oil, and other old parts which needed to be replaced with new ones. Poor farmers who could not afford regular service for their tractors, and the replacement of the old parts sought used parts from the tycoons who operated these garages. This is an indication of the social gap which had been created by cotton production in the area between the different social groups of farmers. The social gap was also

expressed in the lifestyle of the different farmers, and the explanation lay in the farmers' shrewdness and ability to take advantage of the factors of production to promote their cotton production. Relevant investment of refugee labour services yielded more profits for some farmers.<sup>79</sup>

In considering the lifestyle of some of the rich farmers, particularly in the late 1970s, one could realise that most of the well-built houses of rich farmers were constructed at that time, and the architecture had some close affinity to that of the Portuguese which was commonly noticeable in urban places especially Mbabane and Manzini. However, that is a mere digression, the main issue at this juncture is the conduct of rich farmers to their less able colleagues. Mozambican labour aside, it is crucial to examine the manner in which cotton growing entrepreneurs invested the profits which accrued from investing in cotton by the employment of extra-territorial labour. For instance, the maintenance of tractors of poor growers was often paid for in labour services by the clients. These terms of settling the cost for tractor maintenance was often suggested by the clients because they did not have enough cash to meet the expenses. In some cases it was not a question of little money but it was the farmers' attempts to save money for investment in inputs such as insecticides which were very expensive.<sup>80</sup> For instance, 10 litres of insecticides cost in the region of E500.00, and yet not many farmers could afford that amount. With one litre a farmer could not spray more than 10 acres when the minimum amount of land cultivated by each small scale grower per season was 30 acres and more in a fair season.<sup>81</sup> Yet another factor to consider is that cotton needed to be sprayed quite often, as often as every two months, depending on the amount of insects, and this had to be continued until the harvesting period was over.

In view of these requirements farmers would rather pay for some of the tributary services to cotton production in kind such as garage costs, because owners were also in favour of that arrangement following the rising demand for labour. Poor farmers also depended upon their rich counterparts for fuel for their

tractors.<sup>82</sup> Payment in kind for these services had an adverse impact upon the cotton of the clients. This was due to the fact that patrons were left to determine, quite arbitrarily, the amount of labour time clients were expected to offer in return for the inputs and tractor maintenance they were given by rich entrepreneurs. This trend has been seen by some as representative of some exploitation of financially weak producers by their rich and progressive counterparts. Sometimes this approach sounds plausible though some of the clients in south east Swaziland did not look at it from that angle. But sometimes it is important to go beyond what the testimonies of the people, whose problems are being reported to read the implications of the relationship. It is not enough to concentrate on the superficial social relations of production of the parties involved but to examine the implications, and in this regard clients were forced to reduce labour time on their fields in favour of their patrons'. Without client labour some of the rich farmers could have been forced to reduce the scale of cotton cultivation on their fields.<sup>83</sup>

The hire of labour by clients to supplement that of the family was inconceivable in the light of the shortage of cash for its payment. Family labour was therefore supplemented with communal labour, and this labour has been looked into by John Tosh in the case of the Langi of Uganda. However, Tosh's findings show that communal labour in Uganda was representative of some transitional stage from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist system of production in those areas where cash crop production was gaining ground.<sup>84</sup> In south east Swaziland the system was prevalent long before cash crop production was begun and it has still remained an integral part of the production for both capitalist and pre-capitalist systems of production. According to oral evidence lack of labour supply has been the main cause for the retention of communal labour, and in certain instances its retention has been made unavoidable by the presence of destitute members of the extended family who were maintained by their kin and payment for the support was made in kind.<sup>85</sup> In some instances as shown above, poor cotton growers who sought technical assistance from their rich counterparts have retained the system of 'communal



labour'. However, the latter aspect of 'communal labour' needs some qualification because it was not optional but compulsory to the extent that even the labour time was determined by the patron and there was no democratic conduct in its determination and yet traditional labour was optional and democratic hence its drawback in production. P.T. Bauer, basing his study on West Africa, reached the conclusion that African capitalism was hampered by their (African) financial obligations to their destitute kin, and this discovery bears some affinity to that of the Swazi cultivators.<sup>86</sup> But even in the cases where destitute members of the extended family offered this form of labour, there was some feeling of obligation that if the labour was not forthcoming, the financial support enjoyed by the poor folk would dry up. This constant fear had some compelling effect upon some of these people, and the behaviour was no longer in conformity to the traditional form of communal labour and even the amount of labour time given was a determinant of the future cooperation of the rich member of the extended family with the poor relatives.<sup>87</sup>

Traditionally communal labour was difficult to supervise and it was hard to set the tempo for its performance since that often led to conflict between the host and the work party. The cause of the conflict was that supervision was equivalent to a capitalist system of production where the labour was purchased. In the latter case the supervision was necessitated by the need to maximise profit since the system operated on capital and the need to avoid running the business on some loss. Due to these problems most of the entrepreneurs avoided communal labour particularly on a large scale.<sup>88</sup> However, the engagement of members of the extended family in cotton production was quite extensive and these were drawn from the poverty-stricken members of the extended family who needed support in food, clothes and even shelter. Due to their desperate social and economic position, they depended largely on their able relatives who were already rich from cotton cultivation. In this case the supervision of the labour was extensive, and the tempo for the prosecution of the work was set by the patrons. This dynamic development, which occurred in the social relations of production between relatives, said much

about the impact of capitalism on the community that was deeply involved in cotton production and trade. In practical terms this type of labour could no longer be referred to as communal save only the form the reward took and that was still in kind. In some instances where the patron was unhappy with the labour, and dispensed with it, the relations were strained but due to the desperate economic position of the client, the latter took the initiative to repair the relations.<sup>89</sup> However, poor farmers, who also worked for their patrons, drew quite heavily on communal labour for their cotton cultivation. Unlike the rich entrepreneurs who treated this labour like hired labour, poor farmers retained the traditional social relations of production in order to maintain the relationship because their rural economy was still dependent on it, and even by the early 1980s, this old form of communal labour was nurtured.<sup>90</sup>

But participants in communal labour by the late 1970s and early 1980s were mainly those people who could not make any progress either in food or cash crop production.<sup>91</sup> Since the reciprocal aspect of the labour had been lost it was hard to retain the title 'communal labour' instead some people referred to it as 'rented labour', literally meaning that the hosts entertained the participants for the duration of the labour time and dispensed with them at the end of the session. However, some of the work participants rotated among those farmers who needed labour and were rewarded in kind, that is, in food and drinks. Most of the participants in this type of labour wanted subsistence hence they became customers to different farmers in the cotton growing area in a bid to accumulate adequate short term supplies. In short, those who possessed the ability to attract labour did so and realised profits from it while those who could not were pushed into the background, and this trend is emphatic of the view that the ability to exploit available resources for the improvement of cotton cultivation fanned the process of social segmentation.<sup>92</sup>

According to oral evidence Elliot Shiba bought his first farm in 1976 from a European farmer, Hebrst, who was also leaving Swaziland and returning to South Africa like other settlers who

disapproved of working under a Black government. His success to convince the farmer about his ability to pay for the farm was facilitated by his access to finance in the Swazi Bank and Cotona, both of which were simultaneously willing to finance the project. This economic development is similar to that which Gunnar Myrdal alluded to in his study of economic growth in developing countries when he suggested that economic growth does not benefit everybody to the same degree.<sup>93</sup> It was in 1978 that Shiba purchased his second farm, and in the latter case the Trans-Natal Cotton Ginning Company (J.L. Clark) financed the project and the terms of the loan repayment were settled cordially between the broker and the client. It was also at the same time, late 1970s, that Johannes Nkwanyana of Lavumisa also purchased his two farms from two different settlers who were on the verge of returning to South Africa.<sup>94</sup> His strategy was equivalent to that of Shiba in that he approached both the Trans-Natal Cotton Ginning Company and the Swazi Bank for finance. His success in cotton growing helped him to accumulate enough money with which to pay the deposit while the bank paid the balance and he claimed to have settled the loan for one of the farms in a period of two years.<sup>95</sup> However, in 1980 the year when drought conditions hit the area hard, particularly in the 1980/81 planting season, the crop was unimpressive and the output was also adversely affected. Both farmers were hit hard by the drought to the extent of selling some of their livestock to settle their loans some of which were already outstanding. Part of the money for this had come from the side-line businesses which were operated concurrently with cotton cultivation.<sup>96</sup>

Side-line businesses dated back to the mid 1970s, when investment in cotton was lucrative. Most of those farmers who began these businesses did so to raise additional cash to finance cotton cultivation. These farmers were Johannes Nkwanyana who owned a grocery, butchery, petrol filling station, restaurant, bottle store and a vegetable shop all of which were already in operation by 1980 when field studies were carried out.<sup>97</sup> Elliot Shiba on the other hand operated two trading stores, a restaurant, a butchery, petrol filling station, motor spare parts and a fruit shop, and all

these businesses were run by him along with cotton growing.<sup>98</sup> In addition to these businesses each of the two farmers also reared cattle. Livestock in some cases, such as in the cases of Samuel Nsibande and Johannes Nkwanyana, were used as initial capital to finance cotton production.<sup>99</sup> In other instances such as those of Elliot Shiba, Amos Matse, Johannes Nzuza and others, livestock were a result of profitable investment in cotton cultivation.<sup>100</sup> But in both cases, business in livestock was interdependent with cotton cultivation, a point developed in Chapter Five. This form of interdependence was also established between cotton and other businesses from which cash was drawn to supplement finance for cotton production. In adverse seasons when the output was depressed, money was drawn from the other investments to settle instalments with the Swazi Bank or Cotona or Clark.<sup>101</sup> Money raised through these side-line businesses was also invested in the purchase of less expensive inputs like fertilizers, payment of wages, purchase of insecticides and that of repair parts for the tractors and trucks used in the transportation of labour and inputs.<sup>102</sup> However, it is important to note that even though these businesses were helpful to support cotton cultivation, the time farmers spent on their management diverted attention away from cotton and the result was the adversely affected output and quality.<sup>103</sup>

According to some entrepreneurs, side-line businesses need not be seen to have exclusively been beneficial to owners but to the communities in which they were operated as well. This applied to all the businesses particularly when the long distances which linked cotton areas to the business centres are taken into consideration. For instance, the distance between Nhlangano and the Cotton Belt, was estimated at 100 or more kilometres which made frequent visitations there very difficult for a people whose means of travel and the money to pay for it were poor. The provision of these facilities, which included trading stores, butcheries, repair garages, petrol filling stations and cotton cultivation, led to the improvement of the infrastructure which linked the area to Matsapha, where the Cotona gin was, and to Clark's gin at Phongolo. Invariably this network became

widespread and linked the area to virtually every part of the country particularly business places. More community schools were constructed under the auspices of the cotton growers, a new era because schools had previously been built by government.<sup>104</sup> Due to the availability of money and the realisation of the need for children to receive education, more schools became available. In addition to schools the community also constructed local clinics where minor health problems were solved, and by the early 1980s there were more than one clinic in the area.<sup>105</sup>

The developments discussed in this chapter can be related to Table D below. The table shows the output and value of the crop that was produced each year along with the price of the commodity per lb/kg from 1960 at a time when the output was still low due to the backward farming methods which were used. In 1961, the government introduced the pupil/advanced/master farmer scheme whose objective was to improve the farming methods of the farmers, but its effect only became noticeable after 1965, when the output began to rise.<sup>106</sup> However, at that time there were many other factors which contributed to the rise in the output. One of these factors was the local cotton market which was provided by Cotona. Second, it was late in 1964 that the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank was established to finance small scale farmers who had failed to qualify for loans with any of the local merchant banks. Loans to these small scale farmers were made available in the planting season 1964/65.<sup>107</sup> However, both Cotona and the Swazi Bank only became effective in the years which followed after their establishment, and 1967 is one of these years because it was in it that the bumper crop of cotton was realised as shown on table D. However, the years which followed thereafter were hit hard by drought conditions hence the slumped cotton output which ruled until 1971 when it began to improve along with the output in the crop, and also in the price at which the crop sold.<sup>108</sup> It was in 1971, for instance, that the output rose from a small 7 short tons output in 1970 to a record of 10 short tons in 1971. This revival was also influenced by the revival in the price of the crop from 7 cents in 1967 to 15 cents in 1971,<sup>109</sup> a rise which was more than 50%, and there is no doubt that this

development had a positive effect on the output in cotton. These events attracted more cotton growers, some of whom<sup>110</sup> had a strong impact on cotton production in the Cotton Belt. It was also at this time that the labour shortage was alleviated by the influx of Mozambican refugees, as the wars of liberation became more destructive to the rural economy there. This influx became stronger after the 1975 independence which pushed the disgruntled National Resistance Movement of Mozambique into wars of sabotage. As a result the output rose more than before as reflected on the table. The price of the crop was yet another powerful attraction and stimulus for more cotton production.

In conclusion, the Hla Myint vent-for-surplus model, whose improved version was propounded and applied to West Africa by J.S. Hogendorn, helps in the analysis of the factors which attracted farmers to south east Swaziland in the 1960s and 1970s in particular. The 1970s attracted more growers due to the booming trade in cotton that had been facilitated by the improvement of the infrastructure which made it easier for the administration to disseminate technical education to the farmers. The departure of some settlers to South Africa enabled some growers to acquire farms on favourable conditions. This factor ties up well with the credit facilities which were provided by brokers such as Cotona and Clark, that were later supplemented by the establishment of the Swazi Bank.

#### NOTES

1. Sna File 3172b Lovett to Government Secretary on the potential of cotton production in south east Swaziland, 11 August, 1953.
2. Sna Box 98 Reoprt of the Chief Agricultural Officer on maize and cotton production and Rural Development in south east Swaziland, 9 May, 1957.
3. T.W. Schultz, 1976, op. cit. pp. 143-147, and when these were combined and fertility realised through compost manure the output was plentiful.

4. Sna Rcs 515/41 Government Secretary to Clark on their application to monopolise lowveld cotton, 26 February, 1937.
5. Sna File 3172b Lovett report on Clark's competition for Swazi cotton in the south east of the lowveld, Makhava, 25 June, 1955.
6. Sna Box 15 File 18 Clark report on their gin at Phongolo to process Swazi cotton in south east Swaziland, 26 November, 1959.
7. Sna 3172b Government Secretary to Language on the latter's application to set up a gin in Nhlangano, 27 May, 1953; Government Secretary to Cheales on the monopoly over cotton produced in Nhlangano, 15 August, 1955.
8. Sna Rcs 697/33 Hutchinson report on the progress in cotton cultivation in Bremersdorp, 9 August, 1933.
9. Sna Box 15 File 18 Report of the Agricultural Officer of Shiselweni on cotton cultivation in Hlushwana, 25 September, 1957; interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980 and Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
10. Interview Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1982; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1982; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1982; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 1982.
11. See John Iliffe, A Modern History of Tanganyika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) pp. 274-289.
12. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
13. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Almon Sikhosana, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980.
14. Interview Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980.
15. Sna Box 15 File 18 Agricultural Officer to Ralli Brothers on Clark's expansion to Makhava, 16 July, 1955.
16. John Iliffe, 1979, op. cit. pp. 274-289; interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 10 August, 1983; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 10 August, 1983; Simon Sihlongonyane, Nsalitje, 10 August, 1983.

17. Sna Box 15 File 18 Clark to Government Secretary on the cotton market at Phongolo, 6 May, 1959.
18. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20, 30 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980.
19. Sna Box 50 File 52/3 Swaziland Milling Company Correspondence to Swaziland Government Secretary on monopoly over maize and maize products in Swaziland, 21 June, 1958; Box 18 File 20/6 Swaziland Milling Company Agreement with Swaziland Government Secretary to handle maize products, 9 August, 1959.
20. Sna Box 75 File 104 Agricultural Officer report on seed distribution to farmers, 9 September, 1961.
21. Sna Box 98 File 145 Agricultural Officer report on Rural Development especially the pupil/advanced/master farmer project, 31 December, 1962.
22. Sna Box 98 File 145/2 Report of the Agricultural Officer on progress of the pupil/advanced/master farmer project, 11 August, 1962.
23. Sna Box 96 File 145/2 Report of the Agricultural Officer on the progress of the pupil/advanced/master farmer project, 11 August, 1962.
24. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nzuza, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
25. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980.
26. Interview Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Simon Dlamini, Sitilo, 12 July, 1982.
27. Interview Simon Dlamini, Sitilo, 12 July, 1982; David Xaba, Sitilo, 12 July, 1982; and David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 12 July, 1982.
28. Sna Box 98 File 145/2 Report of the Agricultural Officer on the objectives of advanced/master farmers projects, 31 August, 1962.



29. Sna Box 18 File 27 Minutes of a meeting on the formation of Cooperative Organisations, 9 May, 1963.
30. Sna Box 16 File 18/5/1 Ministry of Agriculture report on the Cotton Improvement Fund, 9 May, 1963; File 18/5/1<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Agriculture Monthly report on Cotton Improvement, 15 September, 1967.
31. Sna Box 80 File 115/6 Ministry of Agriculture Minutes of a meeting on the need for Agricultural Extension and Training Centre, 21 July, 1963.
32. Sna Box 80 File 115/6 Ministry of Agriculture Minutes of a meeting on the need for Agricultural Extension and Training Centre, 21 July, 1963.
33. Interview L. Zini, Extension Officer, Nhlangano, 27 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 24 November, 1980; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 24 November, 1980.
34. Sna Box 16 File 18/5<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the Cotton Advisory Committee Meeting on technical advice, 28 August, 1966.
35. Sna Box 16 File 18/5<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the Cotton Advisory Committee Meeting on technical advice, 28 August, 1966.
36. Sna Box 51 File 53/5 Minutes of a committee on the formation of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, 28 February, 1964.
37. Sna Box 18 File 20/6 Swaziland Milling Company report to Government on maize imports from South Africa for 1964, as being 18,400 tons, 25 November, 1964.
38. Sna Box 51 File 53/5 Minutes of a committee on the formation of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, 28 February, 1964.
39. Sna Box 51 File 53/5 Minutes of a committee on the formation of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, 28 February, 1964.
40. Sna Box 51 File 53/5 Minutes of a committee on the formation of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank, 28 February, 1964; Swaziland Government: Report on Credit for Housing and Agriculture, 28 February, 1964, p. 25.
41. Swaziland Government: Report on Credit for Housing and Agriculture, 28 February, 1964, p. 25.
42. Swaziland Government: Report on Credit for Housing and Agriculture, 28 February, 1964, p. 25; Interview Simon Noge, Manzini branch of Swazi Bank, 25 July, 1980.

43. Interview Simon Noge, Manzini, 25 July, 1980; M.J. Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Cotton Board, Manzini, 25 July, 1980.
44. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Report of the Ministry of Agriculture on cotton marketing in Swaziland, 16 August, 1966.
45. Sna Box 62 File 70/2 Minutes of the Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative on the coordination of farmers' crop marketing, 15 July, 1966.
46. Sna Box 62 File 70/2 Minutes of the Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative on the coordination of farmers' crop marketing, 15 July, 1966.
47. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative report on cotton marketing in south east Swaziland, 31 December, 1967.
48. Interview M.J. Clark, Manzini, 25 July, 1980; Tom Jele, Manzini, 21 June, 1986. Tom succeeded Clark in the office of Chief Executive Officer for the Cotton Board.
49. Interview M.J. Clark, Manzini, 25 July, 10 November, 1980; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
50. This was true of Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nzuza, Matsanjeni, 27 October, 1980; and Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 27 October, 1980.
51. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Southern District Extension Officer report on cotton marketing, 31 August, 1968.
52. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 9 June, 1983; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 9 June, 1983; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 June, 1983; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 15 June, 1983.
53. Sna Box 17 File 18/13/1 Monthly Report of the Extension Officer, Southern District, 30 June, 1980.
54. Sna Box 17 File 18/13 Minutes of a Meeting of the Cotton Board, 6 August, 1968.
55. Interview Shadrack Sibanyoni, Mbabane, 25 July, 1980; Petros Thwala, Mbabane, 25 July, 1980. These were once involved in the supervision of demonstrators in the 1960s.
56. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Philemon Nxumalo

Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.

57. Sna Box 17 File 18/13 Minutes of the Cotton Board on cotton production in south east Swaziland, 21 July, 1969.

58. Sna Box 17 File 18/13/1 Ministry of Agriculture Monthly Report on the progress of the Crop Production Scheme, 31 July, 1970.

59. Interview M.J. Clark, Manzini, 25 July, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.

60. Sna Box 92 File 131/3 Ministry of Agriculture report on the progress of the Crop Production Scheme, 30 June, 1970.

61. Sna Box 94 File 145/2 Report of the Chief Agricultural Officer on the Advanced/Master farmer scheme and the incentive to step up production in various crops, 25 January, 1972.

62. Interview M.J. Mcetshwa, Clark's Phongolo Office and Gin, 21 August, 1985; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 26 September, 1985; Albert Manana, Sitilo, 26 September, 1985.

63. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980, all confirmed that Nsibande purchased his first farm in 1969.

64. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 21 August, 1985; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 25 August, 1985; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 27 August, 1985; Mbhavumane Ntshangase, Hlushwana, 5 September, 1985, to name a few of those who owned title deed land.

65. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980, who purchased his farms from leaving settlers on favourable terms; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; and Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 15 August, 1983, all had similar experiences in that settlers were ready to sell farms on terms which favoured their customers.

66. Interview Titus Kunene, Assistant Manager, Matsapha, 11 August, 1980.

67. Sna Box 28 File 30/2 Report of the Extension Officer on crops and costs of production in Shiselweni, 30 October, 1974.

68. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 September, 1983.

69. Interview Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 11 August, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 September, 1983.
70. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 15 September, 1983; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 September, 1983; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 15 September, 1983.
71. Interview Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze, 15 September, 1983; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 15 September, 1983; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 15 September, 1983; and Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 9 May 1985.
72. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 10 May, 1985, he claimed to have begun to grow cotton in 1975, by which time the price was already handsome.
73. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 15 May, 1985; Almon Mlotsa, Lavumisa, 15 May, 1985, both alleged that the distance was about 60 kilometres.
74. Sna Box 68 File 89<sup>2</sup> Cotton Board announcement of the local price of cotton per kilogramme for 1972, August, 1971, well before the planting season started.
75. Interview David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 15 May, 1985; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 15 May, 1985; Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze, 15 May, 1985; Elliot Masuku, Mgamudze, 15 May, 1985.
76. Interview Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 9 May, 1986; Ndawonye Sikhondze, Lulakeni, 9 May, 1986.
77. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 9 May, 1986; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 19 July, 1986.
78. Sna Box 17 File 18/12<sup>4</sup> Cotton Board: Annual Report, 1977, Appendix 2.
79. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 19 July, 1986, could not hide the fact that while he and some of his colleagues became rich others did not.
80. Interview Jotham Simelane, Nsalitje, 12 May, 1986, who was one of the clients and he depended on family and communal labour to grow his own cotton.
81. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
82. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980, both of whom had

clients because they owned repair garages, claimed to have also provided their clients with fuel.

83. However, Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980, denied this allegation.

84. John Tosh, "The Cash-Crop Revolution in Tropical Africa: An Agricultural Appraisal", African Affairs, 74 (1980) pp. 79-94; and \_\_\_\_\_, "Lango Agriculture During The Early Colonial Period: Land and Labour in a Cash-Crop Economy", Journal of African History, xix 3 (1978) pp. 415-439.

85. P.T. Bauer, West African Trade: A study of Competition, Oligopoly and Monopoly in a Changing Economy, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1963) p. 12; interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 19 May, 1986; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 19 May, 1986; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 21 June, 1986; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 21 June, 1986.

86. Interview Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 21 June, 1986; Jotham Simelane, Mgamudze, 21 June, 1986; Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 21 June, 1986.

87. Interview Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 7 August, 1983; Joshua Vilakati, Makhava, 16 August, 1983; Samuel Vilakati, Makhava, 16 August, 1983; John Vilakati, Makhava, 27 August, 1986.

88. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 19 May, 1983; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 5 March, 1983; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 5 March, 1984.

89. Interview Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 21 August, 1980; Adam Gamedze, Nsalitje, 4 April, 1982; Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 15 October, 1985.

90. Interview Simon Sihlongonyane, Sitilo, 19 May, 1982; David Sitsebe, Nsalitje, 20 April, 1983.

91. Interview David Xaba, Sitilo, 20 April, 1983; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 April, 1983; Simon Dlamini, Sitilo, 15 August, 1985.

92. W. Elkan, An Introduction to Development Economics (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973) pp. 40-91; interview Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 15 August, 1985; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 August, 1985.

93. Interview Titus Kunene, Matsapha, 11 August, 1980; Simon Noge, Manzini, 20 August, 1980.

94. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 21 August, 1982; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 19 May, 1983.
95. Interview Simon Noge, Manzini, 11 August, 1980; Elliot Dlamini, Manzini, 11 August, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980.
96. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980.
97. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980; Moses Musa, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980, Nkwanyana's employee on the petrol filling station.
98. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Mahosha Mamba, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980, one of the employees on the grocery.
99. Interview Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; 29 November, 1983; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 29 November, 1983, 12 August, 1984.
100. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 August, 1984; Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 21 August, 1984; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 21 August, 1984.
101. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 19 August, 1980, he sold more than 200 heads of cattle to settle his bank instalments in 1980; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 20 October, 1980, he too sold more than 200 heads of cattle, about 400 goats and one of his farm to pay a loan of more than E30,000 with the Swazi Bank and Clark.
102. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 26 August, 1984; Jotham Simelane, Mgamudze, 26 August, 1984.
103. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 26 August, 1986; Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 26 August, 1986, both of them denied that side-line businesses side-tracked their attention for cotton production.
104. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980, and others.

105. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980.

106. Sna Box 98 File 145/2 Report of the Chief Agricultural Officer on progress of the pupil/advanced/master farmer project, 21 August, 1966.

107. Sna Box 98 File 145/2 Report of the Swaziland Credit and Savings Bank on finance for small scale farmers, 31 May, 1966.

108. Swaziland Government: Ministry of Agriculture Annual Report, 1971.

109. Swaziland Government: Ministry of Agriculture Annual Report, 1972, Appendix 3.

110. Those who were attracted by the improvement in the price of cotton in the 1970s were Johannes Nkwanyana, Mbhavumane Ntshangase, Samuel Vilane, Abel Tsabedze and others. These farmers are among those who have made some phenomenal advancements in cotton production in the area.

TABLE D.

THE TABLE SHOWS THE QUANTITY OF EXPORTED COTTON, THE  
NOMINAL PRICE PER POUND, AND THE VALUE OF THE EXPORTED  
CROP IN THE YEARS, 1960-85

<u>YERAR</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u> (short tons) (000)	<u>PRICE</u> (cents per kg)	<u>VALUE</u> (R) (000)
1960	4	6	267*
1961	5	7	719
1962	3	7	413
1963	6	7	870
1964	5	7	695
1965	7	7	504
1966	9	6	1367
1967	13	7	
1968	8	13	
1969	6	13	
1970	7	14	
1971	10	15	
1972	12	19	2053
1973	13	32	2484
1974	18	36	
1975	23	25	4999
1976	12	35	4095
1977	15	49	
1978	22	39	8663
1979	16	46	6572
1980	23	52	11102
1981	25		12499
1982	14	52	6914
1983	9	56	4564
1984	18	66	
1985	17	86	



SOURCE: Kingdom of Swaziland: Annual Reports of the Ministry of Agriculture, 1961-66; 1967-71, Appendix 2; 1972-74, Appendix 3; 1975-1985, Cotton Board: Annual Reports, for the output statistics; for prices from 1961-1972 see the 1972 report. For the years 1973-85 see Cotton Board: Annual Reports.

\* 267 was expressed in British currency, pounds, and yet from 1960 the currency which was legal tender in Swaziland were South African rands.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ROLE OF COOPERATIVE UNIONS IN COTTON  
CULTIVATION, 1954-85

The cooperative unions, particularly in the agricultural sector, were formed to protect the interests of producers against exploitation by purchasers. The initial objectives of these unions hinged upon the marketing of the items produced, and when producers pooled their commodities together, particularly when the demand for the items became elastic, they utilised their bargaining power to look for lucrative purchasers. To the marketing responsibilities were also added those of the improvement of production standards through the provision of basic inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides within the easy physical and financial reach of the farmers. This step was still part of the endeavour to satisfy the market demand by encouraging farmers to step up commodity production. In south east Swaziland this aspect was handled by the Matsanjeni Cotton Farmers' Cooperative Union (Matsanjeni Union) which was formed in response to the expanding volume of trade in cotton. J.S. Hogendorn's version of the vent-for-surplus theory predicted that the proper utilisation of the factors of production would lead to some expansion in the volume of trade and that that would later provoke some booming conditions. South east Swaziland experienced this in the late 1970s, when the infrastructure had been tremendously improved to cater for the trade in cotton. And also due to the available multiple investment opportunities the cooperative expanded its responsibilities by including the operation of other businesses such as farmers' grocers. The union also purchased a tractor to hire out first and foremost to the members and later to other farmers. The money which accrued from these enterprizes was used to support the efforts of the union to promote the development of Swazi cotton cultivation.

Matsanjeni Cotton Farmers' Cooperative Union

Matsanjeni Cotton Farmers' Cooperative Union was formed in 1954, according to oral evidence. It was formed at the initiative of Swazi growers in that area who already grew cotton by that year, and these were Albert Vilakati, David Dlamini, Samuel Nsibande, Deacon Nsibande, Lokhakhi Dlamini, Josiah Vilakati, and Amos Matse.<sup>1</sup> The year 1954 was the second season since these cultivators had started to grow cotton in south east Swaziland, and the champion of Swazi cotton growing and of the formation of the cooperative was Albert according to the oral evidence offered by these farmers.<sup>2</sup> The Cooperative Union was formed due to the problems of cotton marketing the farmers had faced in the region from the beginning of cotton cultivation. Initially, the Union had solved the problem of transport by persuading those people in the area who owned trucks to hire. This is the type of transport they asked for to transport the crop to Magudu, and in the following year, 1955, Ralli Brothers offered their truck to the growers as transport for their cotton at what they promised to be a small charge.<sup>3</sup> However, Albert and his colleagues persisted with their hired transport from the Xaba Brothers until 1956 when the latter company assured them that the charges would be reasonable. Before the growers, who were members of the Union, accepted the offer they asked the company for assurance that the arrangement would not be exploitative in the long run.<sup>4</sup>

By the time the growers accepted the package it was still not clear whether or not the growers would be safe from exploitation by sending their cotton to Magudu by the company's transport. But since the company offered other inducements such as seeds and insecticides at reduced costs, some farmers persuaded their colleagues to accept the package and began to send their cotton to the market on Ralli Brothers' transport. It is, however, important to note that the acceptance of the Ralli Brother package had been made possible by some misunderstanding which arose among the farmers and divided their opinion.<sup>5</sup> While Albert and others were reluctant to accept the terms given them by the company since they did not give any latitude of choice regarding the sale of their crop, other farmers, who were in the majority, gave in. The division between the farmers on this issue, was caused by the

suspicion that Albert and his friends, David and Deacon, were bent on turning the Union into an instrument by which they wanted to get favours from brokers, favours which would benefit them as individuals and not the Union in general. Albert was the Chairman of the Union, while the others were members who assisted him to run the affairs of the Union.<sup>6</sup> However, no matter how logical these allegations might sound, it is difficult to accept them given the amount of time the Union had been formed with the unacceptable executive in office. It was at the end of the second year of the Union's formation that the division began to interfere with the fulfilment of the Union's objectives. At the time the division occurred, it stopped the Union from striking some bargaining power with brokers such as Ralli Brothers and Clark, as far as the price at which growers could sell their crop to the broker was concerned.<sup>7</sup>

Consequently, potential members of the Union were discouraged from joining by the disgruntled elements. By 1957, the Union was left with only a handful membership of 10 and that made it hard for it to run its affairs effectively. The main handicap was that a small membership yielded very little money because the Union depended for its fund on the joining fee of 10 shillings per member per year.<sup>8</sup> Money was one of the factors which led to the downfall of the Union in that the Chairman, Albert, was reported to have consistently refused to give a statement of how the funds were being spent. He had also refused to be checked on how the money was invested to yield some profits for the benefit of the members in the long run. In short, the running of the Union's affairs was lacking in democracy in much the same way that the leadership and its committee had been formed. Albert was reported to have been a self-appointed chairman on the basis that he possessed some better standard of formal education, mainly because he was a teacher by profession and he was more qualified to administer the Union.<sup>9</sup> The latter excuse for wielding all the power was the main cause of the secession by other farmers other than that of the embezzlement of Union funds, particularly when one considers that by the time of the division there were less than 20 registered and paid up

members. These members had paid a membership fee of only 10 shillings per head per year which was not enough to cause all the complaints about the executive having used the money to develop themselves at the expense of others. At that time there were also limited opportunities for the investment of the money to yield profits that could have been of assistance to the farmers in the long run.<sup>10</sup>

By the end of 1957, the Union was already defunct, and remained in that state until after 1967 when it was revived.<sup>11</sup> This revival occurred after the Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative Union was formed in Manzini in 1963 at the initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Central Swaziland Producers' Cooperative Union (CCU) was formed in response to the attempts by some farmers, like those of Matsanjeni, to find an instrument by which they could facilitate trade and meet the transportation problems which arrested cotton marketing and the purchase of inputs that farmers required to promote the cultivation of cotton and other commodities.<sup>12</sup> According to oral evidence, the Matsanjeni Union was revived in 1967 by some of those farmers who had opposed the manner in which it had functioned in the 1950s. Elliot Shiba, Johannes Nzuzza and other colleagues are believed to have been the main moving force behind the revival of the Union. But it was argued that since these farmers were among those who had plotted the downfall of the first form of the Union, Albert and those who sympathised with him, opposed the recuperation of the Union by those people who had caused its downfall in the 1950s.<sup>13</sup> In fact, when the Union was revived in 1967, the initiative had come from CCU. The latter Union encouraged farmers to sell their commodities in bulk, that is, pool their produce together in an effort to beat the transportation costs in each area. It was also thought that this system could strengthen the bargaining position of the farmers whereby they could look for a consumer whose terms of purchase were more lucrative than others. Since the Matsanjeni Union was the only cotton cooperative in the country then, CCU wanted to revive it and use it as a model for cooperatives formed by indigenous farmers in response to problems which hampered progress in the

improvement of the rural economy. CCU also suggested to the farmers that if they wanted to apply for credit facilities from the Swazi Bank, it (CCU) would insist on every farmer to produce a membership card from his local cooperative, and that could qualify farmers for the finance they required. In certain instances the credit facilities were handed to the farmers through their local cooperatives and that presented an opportunity for the rich farmers who had already formed the executive for the Matsanjeni Union to benefit from that fund more than any other group of farmers. For instance, some farmers who were in the Matsanjeni Union Executive, such as Elliot Shiba, are believed to have purchased tractors soon after their Union had been revived. Suspicious growers in the area concluded that the money Elliot and colleagues had used to purchase the jointly owned tractor had been taken from that which CCU had given as a loan to improve the facilities of the Matsanjeni Union. However, Elliot Shiba and colleagues told a different story by pointing out that the money had been secured both from their savings and from the Swazi Bank.<sup>14</sup>

According to oral evidence when rich farmers engineered the revival of the Matsanjeni Union they had perceived of some opportunity to improve their farming economy. The professed objective for the revival of the Union at that time was to meet the marketing needs of the farmers in the area and provide farming inputs, most which were obtainable far from the area and involved farmers in heavy expenses.<sup>15</sup> However, some of the farmers thought that the revival of the Union by those rich colleagues was meant to promote their interests and not those of the farming community in general. It was thought, for instance, that the rich farmers wanted to use the Union to ask for inducements from the consumers like Clark and Cotona. These consumers were keenly interested to win the support of the farmers in the area in order to establish some long term economic cooperation.<sup>16</sup> However, it is difficult to know what the main objective behind the revival of the Union was other than to improve cotton cultivation by providing technical advice to the farmers, both members and non-members. This was achieved

through the cooperation of the Union with the Cotton Board whose technician visited the area casually from its formation in 1968.<sup>17</sup> The intended visit of the technician was announced in advance so that farmers could spread the news throughout the area. The technician usually conducted demonstration lessons on a farm regarded by the executive and the technician as central to most of the farmers in the area. These lessons were due to the initiatives of the executives of the Union.<sup>18</sup>

To alleviate the transport problems of bringing inputs from distant retail stores, the Union also constructed some sheds where they sold most of the farming inputs to cotton growers. These inputs were purchased through a loan the Union secured from CCU each planting season. Since farmers were aware of the financial and other inconveniences which they encountered in an attempt to purchase inputs from distant retail shops, they did not complain about the prices at which the inputs were sold by the Union. Another achievement which the Union made was to purchase a tractor in 1969 which was hired out to those farmers who needed it and could afford the rental.<sup>19</sup> But this tractor hire was yet another cause of some dissatisfaction among those farmers who felt that the conduct of the executive was corrupt. It was circulated among the executive members before any other member could have access to its services. Some farmers began to spread the rumour that executive members did not pay for the services of the tractor nor paid even for the fuel instead these maintenance expenses were met by those farmers who were not the executive. But it is important to mention that these suspicions were spread by farmers who had disapproved of the revival of the Union by those who had plotted its downfall in the 1950s. In short, the disgruntled elements were also looking for something they could use to avenge themselves for having been discredited in the 1950s.

However, the attempts to discredit the executive of the revived Union in the late 1960s were futile due to many factors which assisted the executive to prove more productive than its predecessors. These factors included the formation of CCU which

reinforced the existence and effectiveness of the Matsanjeni Union by financing it, and the Cotton Board which provided technical education to the farmers to iron out most of the problems which they encountered in the production of cotton. To the common farmers who were not aware of the government supported programmes, all these developments were accredited to the efforts of the executive of the Union because when they compared these achievements with those which Albert and colleagues made in the 1950s the two were not comparable at all. The Union membership grew and was more than 500 farmers in Matsanjeni and neighbouring areas by 1970, three years after the Union was revived.<sup>20</sup> It is important to note that membership to the Union was not compulsory nor automatic which means that farmers had to take the initiative to seek membership with the Union and pay the membership fee of E1,00 each year.<sup>21</sup> Even if the executive was corrupt in so far as it misused Union funds, it could have taken the farmers a long time to notice it due to the confidence it had already built in the farmers by this time, the early 1970s. This view was expressed by most of the farmers who were interviewed on field research, that is, the executive were being black-mailed by the dissatisfied elements about its corruption. This confidence, which farmers had in the executive, was even made stronger in 1971, when some new cotton varieties of albacala were introduced and proved more resilient to pest attack and had a higher yield capacity than earlier varieties.<sup>22</sup>

But on the other hand, the executive failed to convince all the farmers in the area, both registered and unregistered, to pool their output and sell it together through the Union. The explanation for the farmers' refusal varied from one year to another depending on the ruling price, which meant that in those years when the Union's price was better than those of the other consumers or even competitive, farmers sold their crop through the Union to cut down on the transportation costs.<sup>23</sup> Some of the brokers had begun to offer transport at reasonable charges in an attempt to attract more customers to them. It was not easy for the Union to prevent brokers from dealing directly with growers as explained above, and especially when brokers offered more



competitive prices than those of the Union.<sup>24</sup> This trend remained effective to date, and those farmers who were Union members had done so in order to benefit by way of purchasing inputs from the Union and also have access to facilities such as the hire of the Union tractor to cultivate their fields. Since some of the members did not have enough cash to purchase enough inputs from the cooperative, they were allowed to get some inputs on credit and were contracted to sell to the Union so that the costs were met in that way. But some avoided to do so and sold instead where they thought the price was more profitable and forgot conveniently to settle their accounts with the Society altogether. Since the money had been secured from CCU, the latter sought means of recovering it, and arranged to deal with farmers jointly with the Matsanjeni Union from 1973,<sup>25</sup> and its involvement is discussed below.

#### .C.C.U and the Matsanjeni Union 1973-76

After the Matsanjeni-Lavumisa region took the lead in the production of cotton in Swaziland from the 1950s, the main focus of consumers shifted from other areas to the cotton belt, and that was also true of the ministry of agriculture, particularly after independence. Part of the decision to intervene and seek to promote cotton cultivation in the area, was to reinforce the objectives farmers had to form a Cooperative Union that lacked an impact on cotton cultivation, because of lack of support from farmers to raise the crop's output in the area. To this effect CCU did not deal with the farmers directly as an alien body, but through the nominal Matsanjeni Union.<sup>26</sup> The early 1970s saw some rise in cotton output and some officials of CCU and some rich cotton farmers instituted a programme that was meant to process cotton seeds into oil products in the south eastern part of the country where most of the cotton was grown. It was due to these objectives that CCU took up the responsibility of uniting the farmers in the area to help improve the output in cotton.<sup>27</sup> CCU had hoped to achieve this by providing farming inputs to the farmers in the cotton areas on credit with the hope to recover it when farmers sold their crop to them at the end of each season. In 1973, their first year of this programme in Matsanjeni, the

farmers cooperated well with the group but in the following years, after they noticed that CCU was even charging higher interest rates than their own union, some of the farmers avoided to sell to CCU and sold instead to Clark at Phongolo where the conditions were still better relative to those which obtained in Swaziland.<sup>28</sup> But in spite of this dissatisfaction some farmers stayed on and bought their farming inputs from CCU and also sold the crop to them. In that way the farmers argued that the transportation costs were being reduced drastically, both for the inputs and even for the disposal of their crop to the market and on that score they stayed on with CCU.

In 1976 CCU withdrew its support for the cotton farmers in Matsanjeni because its attempts to promote among the farmers a spirit of a purposeful cooperative had failed. However, in spite of this failure some of the farmers benefited from the venture and these positive results involved among other things the use of the right type of seeds, fertilizers and other inputs to produce handsome results. These inputs were sold to the farmers at the Union's offices and that reduced the transport costs of bringing these inputs from distant places such as Nhlangano, Manzini, and others by individual farmers. This attitude took root both among those who had cooperated with CCU while they served as an executive of the Union and later spread even to those who had avoided CCU because they thought that it had come to the region to exploit them by selling to them inputs at very high prices and charge them high interest rates for the credit facilities they were provided. This occurred after the farmers had realised that membership gave them many benefits such as saving money on transport.

By 1976, the membership was reported to have been more than 100 rich 'big' famers, and most of them were eager to partake of the benefits extended to the members, and these included the hire of a tractor at a reduced charge for members to cultivate their fields.<sup>29</sup> Yet other benefits were those of buying shares with the Union to get some profits at the end of each year. The Cooperative began before 1976 to lend out money not

necessarily to farmers in the area, but even cotton growers whom they knew well from outside the area, however in the latter case the rates of interest were higher compared to those of the members. It was in the same year that the Union increased the number of tractors from about one in 1973, to about 7 in 1976, and more farmers could have access to tractile services.<sup>30</sup> Through their active involvement in their support of the Union's activities, most farmers were able to utilise the facilities it provided to improve cotton cultivation. The renting of the tractor was made possible and easier because the majority of the farmers opposed the initial rental of E20.00 or more per hour for tractile services and forced it down to the region of E15.00 or slightly more per hour.<sup>31</sup> Because there were more farmers who needed the tractor services, even the depressed rental was still helpful to maintain the tractors and yield some profit which allowed the Union to expand its tentacles to other investment avenues.

It was due to the cooperation of the farmers that the Union was able to respond more relevantly to the production problems of the farmers in the area. These ranged from the provision of virtually all the basic farmers' requirements, and these were sold at the offices of the Union to all farmers who needed them. Farmers had also insisted that the accounts books be audited by a government accountant every year to check the mistakes committed by the office bearers. It was hoped that this development would counteract the embezzlement of Union funds. But then, this type of arrangement, ideal as it might have appeared, suffered adversely from a number of loopholes in that the farmers did not send an independent representative to monitor the session and evaluate the authenticity of the exercise. And even before auditing was done, the farmers needed somebody to ensure that all the entries had been made along with the deductions reflected and that all these things were shown on the accounts books accordingly.<sup>32</sup> While some of the farmers suspected that several receipt books were used, both real and fictitious ones, and that not both forms of receipts were indicated on the general account books, other farmers, who constituted the majority, were not aware of these problems, and they did not

know of an effective method to exterminate this undesirable practice. However, since there was no clear evidence that these allegations were authentic, it was assumed that all was well, and auditors had found it hard to spot the tricks which were used to divert Union funds to promote other office bearers' private businesses. But in spite of the misuse of Union funds, most of the farmers supported the Union after their frustration with the rate of interest CCU charged. At least farmers had hoped that the Union could use the crop to bargain for a better buyer between the two brokers instead of being committed to one consumer even when his purchase price was no longer lucrative. In Swaziland, these buyers were represented by Clark whose base was Phongolo, and Cotona, who operated from their base in Matsapha Industrial Site.<sup>33</sup>

It is, however, important to note that bargaining for a better buyer, in terms of the price of seed cotton per kg being higher than that offered by the other worked out well to the benefit of office bearers. This was the case particularly where the officers persuaded buyers to give them inducements so that they could sell the crop to them at whatever price they paid.<sup>34</sup> In short, the crop was not necessarily sold to a buyer who offered a higher price than the other, but one who promised a fat bribe. What it all meant was that officers used their positions to bargain for a fat bribe, and the consumer who bidded in that direction was given the crop, and in the end growers were given a raw deal. Whichever way one tackles the problem of the failure of these unions to inject some incentive into the growers to raise the output, the source of the failure to do so need not be sought in the way farmers responded to the broker price, but in the manner in which they saw themselves as either beneficiaries or losers since they were the ones upon whom production rested.<sup>35</sup> And when this was finally noted by the growers, particularly late in the 1970s, the interest in supporting the Union simply slumped, and that was facilitated by the keen competition which existed between the brokers themselves. Oral evidence also revealed that even the knowledge of the exploitation of farmers by office bearers, in collusion with brokers, was facilitated by the research

of each broker on the activities of the other and the purchase mechanism of each along with that of the Union office bearers. In the end the findings were not published, but were circulated in a very surreptitious manner to some individual farmers, and as a result of this conduct, some farmers decided to sell their cotton as individuals to the broker they thought offered better terms than those which were offered by the Union.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, it was decided that the formation of a stronger Union could most possibly alleviate these problems, and eventually in 1977 both European and Swazi rich farmers in the lowveld decided that a national cooperative be formed to protect the interests of cotton growers against those of the brokers where the two clashed, and that was how the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society (SCCS) was formed to look into the problems of cotton marketing. It attracted mainly rich cotton farmers to sell to it, and it took off the ground in 1979 when it began to sign out big loans to its customers.<sup>37</sup>

#### The Swaziland Cotton Cooperative and Cotton Cultivation

From its birth, the SCCS enjoyed a membership of 500 farmers.<sup>38</sup> This membership consisted of individual farmer members or sometimes membership was acquired through affiliated cooperatives, and the major cotton cooperative at this time was still the Matsanjeni Union. The SCCS had drawn up a list of extremely ambitious objectives, and it was hoped that that would guide it in its operations. First, it sought to protect individual farmer interests against those of the brokers who consumed Swazi grown cotton. Second, it also wanted to safeguard farmers against exploitation by cotton consumer agencies both within and those who came from outside the country. Third, the cooperative wanted to provide financial help to the cotton farmers who had taken up membership with it at low interest rates.<sup>39</sup> According to the layout of these objectives, SCCS had a clear vision of the future for cotton cultivation in the country, but lacked some practical grain of intelligence. However, it aimed to buy all locally produced cotton and then sell it in bulk to those consumers who were interested, and in that fashion it had hoped to use that position to bargain for a good price. But the long term objective

was to process the crop into some textile goods in the country. The Society had already approached some potential tenders who had expressed interest in joining it to provide money to establish such an industry, and this arrangement would offer a handsome price for the crop. A handsome price would be an incentive to growers to increase the land under cultivation and consequently the output could, in a corresponding manner, do like-wise. That development could follow after the SCCS established a plant where the crop could be separated from the seeds so that only the lint could be exported while the seeds were retained to be processed into oil products locally.<sup>40</sup>

The objectives of SCCS were tested in 1979, when a programme, which involved the lending out of money to the members was implemented, but SCCS lacked a clear policy of administering the credit facilities to its members and other customers. Part of the evidence that the scheme was ambitious was shown by the way in which it handled its transactions. Farmers who applied for the loans had their applications granted, and to that effect the Society, which had been given an operational loan by the Swazi Bank, gave small loans to its customers in good faith in that it did not ask for any form of security so that it could be held against the money it signed away.<sup>41</sup> While the names of the debtors had been clearly marked out on the registers of the Society, the latter organisation lacked a system of ensuring that every farmer, with a loan, would honour his commitment by selling his cotton to the Society at least until the loan had been settled then he could sell wherever he wished thereafter. In short, it needed to introduce some binding clause to the customers. By the end of the planting season of 1978/79, the total amount of money the Society had given away as loans was more than E2m.<sup>42</sup> When the harvesting season set in it was clear that the crop had been affected adversely by the climatic conditions, and this forced the farmers, who had hoped for a bumper crop and good year for profits, to sell where they did not owe any money so that they received all of the money and used some to pay their debts with the Society. The agreement with the latter was that farmers should sell there so that the debts could

be cleared whether or not the crop was a bumper. This could have also enabled the Society to honour its obligations to the Bank, the organisation which had given them the initial capital to start off the business. To bypass the Society was easy because there was no mechanism by which such a conduct could have been counteracted by both the Society and even by the broker who had been promised the crop by the Society in the country. In the long run very few farmers honoured their financial obligations to the Society. Some of the farmers complained about the interest rates being too high and when they discovered that there was no method by which the Society punished those who dodged the payment of the loans, they all avoided selling to it and finally that pushed the Society into a tight corner where it could not find any money for the settlement of the bank loan.<sup>43</sup>

However, after some farmers had sold either to Cotona at Matsapha or Clark at Phongolo, they paid part of the instalment to the Society.<sup>44</sup> The reason to avoid selling to the Society, was that farmers' incomes were not very impressive which meant that the deductions the Society wanted to effect could have ruined their hopes of saving for the following season. Most of the instalments were much higher than the average farmer's income particularly in 1979 and the years that followed immediately after the latter year due to the adverse weather conditions which attacked the crop at that time.<sup>45</sup> The 1979/80 planting season was not different either which meant that there were two successive seasons whose cotton output had been depressed, and farmers continued to avoid selling to the Society for the reasons already stated above, and instead they sold directly to the brokers.<sup>46</sup> Unlike in the previous season where some of the farmers had paid part of the instalment to the Society, there was some deliberate avoidance of the payment in the latter season. The explanation was that farmers were deliberately avoiding their instalments because they had seen some of the senior farmers doing it successfully. The attitude of deliberate avoidance to honour support for a society created by them for the sake of promoting their cotton cultivation, was not uncommon hence even at Matsanjeni as discussed above, a similar attitude was noticed

particularly from 1973 to 1976, when farmers dodged CCU.<sup>47</sup> But this attitude was not only characteristic of the non-office bearer members, rather it was a conduct which even officers exhibited and the latter were the ones to stake out a lion's share of the money, and were among the culprits who avoided deliberately to honour their contract to pay their instalments. Consequently, in 1981 the project was abandoned in spite of the marvellous plans it had drawn up, chief among which was the separation of cotton seeds from the lint before it was exported outside the country.<sup>48</sup> The idea was to sell the two separately because in that way the Society could have made more money. And yet among some of the Society's long term plans was the localisation of the crop whereby some secondary industry could be built to process it into some textile commodities, as already pointed out above.

The SCCS's objectives had some socialist blend in themselves in that they had set a target time by which they would turn the local raw material into a manufactured commodity that would sell in the country at reduced prices compared to imports. At least that objective had some progressive developmental concept in that the economic structure would not be one where the economy depended on exports only but would also include some manufactured goods to earn foreign exchange. Even though these goods might not have enjoyed a flourishing market outside Swaziland, at least its purpose would have been to provide alternative goods for the poor who could not afford to buy imports especially if their prices were higher than those of the locally produced commodities.<sup>49</sup> In that way the economy would have received some positive shot in the arm to compete effectively, with some of the weak economies in the region. But due to lack of support from among the farmers, and even among the Society's leaders, the plans could not be realised.

The executive officers of SCCS exhibited some unprecedentedly high degree of selfishness couched in the name of progress on behalf of the farmers. These were the claims given for being voted into office, yet they did so with the objective to



fatten their purses and leave to go and invest the money in their own private businesses. On the other hand, one should also consider the reactions of the erstwhile cotton brokers, and these had their bases in South Africa where their investments were also based.<sup>50</sup> As interested parties, the brokers who had some shares in manufacturing industries in South Africa logically could have been threatened by the farmers' stand to process their locally produced cotton into manufactured goods in the territory. Not only was this move seen from the point of view of killing the goose that laid the eggs but was also thought capable of disrupting the time-honoured consumer market for the South African manufactured goods that crossed the border into Swaziland. In short, the behaviour of the SCCS was not in keeping with the principles of the dependency theory whereby the latter should allow the established structure which moulds it into servicing the economic structure of the already developed world to be predominant.<sup>51</sup> South Africa, in the Southern part of the African continent, represented such a centre where most of the economies were controlled.<sup>52</sup>

It is, however, difficult to tell clearly how the SCCS failed to realise its objectives of establishing the textile factory for the manufacture of cotton goods. It could not have been due to the irresponsible conduct of the office bearers of both the Matsanjeni Union and that of the Big Bend SCCS only (see sketch map in Chapter Six). But in those cases where farmers refused to take up membership and turned down the terms of sale for cotton as stipulated by the cooperative, that might very well have been the influence of the brokers to dismantle the constructive plans of the Society. And this broker strategy worked well in the long run hence the failure of the Society to realise the objectives it was formed to fulfil. It was at the time of the growing fame of the Matsanjeni Union in the late 1970s, for instance, that some brokers began to provide transport services even to those farmers who had not been given any attention before. One such example is that of Clark who stopped to treat farmers differently as they had done before by giving more attention to large scale producers at the expense of small scale ones.<sup>53</sup> This was one of those

subversive moves which brokers used to effectively weaken the strategy of the Union, and in the long run it worked because even though farmers bought their inputs from the Union's offices, and paid hard cash for them, the marketing of the crop continued to be handled on an individual basis; between the farmer and the broker.<sup>54</sup> Even what was later experienced by the SCCS, was precisely the experience of the Matsanjeni Union both before SCCS and later. But the main cause of these unions' failure was broker bribes of fat offers to office bearers who later sold the crop to them at an average price any cotton buyer could have paid.<sup>55</sup> In the long run the system by which cotton was marketed did not serve the purpose for which the Union was formed, because it was the office bearers who enjoyed most of the benefits for which it had been formed.

#### The Ideals of SCCS Cotton and Textile Industry

Part of the grandiose programme for the SCCS was the provision of a locally established manufacturing plant with some forward and backward linkages with the cotton sector.<sup>56</sup> These linkages would, from the producers point of view, represent some forward linkage, whereby the growers would be assured of some constant supply of inputs at affordable prices to stabilise the production of the crop. It was also hoped that the factory would take into consideration all the production costs of the growers when it sold to them the inputs and likewise when it bought the crop, but not to the point of jeopardising its profits. But the latter could always be made up for when the product was sold locally. An example of this is what is happening in socialist countries such as Tanzania where most of the basic commodities are produced locally from local raw materials.<sup>57</sup> However, it is important to note that the difference in the case of Tanzania is that these projects are financed by the government while in Swaziland they were financed by the Society only which was formed at the initiative of some rich cotton cultivating entrepreneurs. Yet another difference was that the Society in Swaziland did not get even moral support from the government apart from drawing money from the Swazi Bank through CCU who acted as their

guarantor. Clothes are relatively expensive in Tanzania, but theoretically, the levels of the prices are determined by the production costs over and above other things considered. Had these commodities been produced outside these countries, the retail prices could not have taken into account the production costs of the raw material in particular and producers could have been given a raw deal.

Yet another progressive aspect of the objective of the SCCS was to separate the lint from the seeds before it was exported. At least this was the plan of the Society, before it actually achieved the localisation of the crop. And after that stage there would be no need to export the raw part of the crop but only the manufactured items. But then lack of unity and of a clearly defined policy to back up the project robbed the farmers of the ideal world they had planned to create. In fact, this endeavour failed mainly due to lack of a clearly defined government policy to support the objectives of the Society. Government allowed the free trade policy to continue unhampered under the pretext that the country had not yet reached the stage where it could undertake projects such as those of the SCCS.<sup>58</sup> Government's argument has always been that there was lack of finance for large scale projects like the establishment of factories and the localisation of locally produced raw materials. The main concern had always been what would happen to the poor farmers' cotton if the ideal projects of the cooperative did not take-off the ground, or even if it did but did not mature to create strong and on-going forward-backward linkages with the farmers for various reasons.

Linkages of this nature, forward and backward have been tested in Nigeria, for instance, and there they produced some positive reaction in that some constant flow of the raw material or farmers' produce between the producing centre and the manufacturing industry was established.<sup>59</sup> Whether the farmers knew that the level of economic growth they had attained in Nigeria was a culmination of their struggle to stabilise agricultural economy was yet another issue. On the contrary, in Swaziland, the conduct of farmers, office bearers included, did not exhibit this

degree of maturity, and that was shown by the greed which blindfolded their vision and led them into embezzling funds of an organisation they had formed themselves, and one which represented their own long term economic plans.<sup>60</sup> In the short term, however, farmers were the direct beneficiaries though their offspring would benefit more in the long run from the economic project they had instituted but failed to prosecute.

While it might be a plausible argument that investors who promoted cotton and had their base and businesses in South Africa, might have deliberately caused the disintegration of these endeavours, in this case there is no clear evidence that this factor had a major contribution. Second, there is no evidence that the farmers were actually very serious about the promotion of their programme of economic growth. This stands out clearly when one examines the stages of growth of the Society and its economic activities. These were non-existent. Not only could it be said that the Society enjoyed some limited progress and success, there was just nothing worth that label as far as the economic activities of the Society were concerned. Soon after the programme was designed and its implementation begun that was the point at which everything came to a standstill. In fact, since there were only two cotton cooperatives worth any note, one will keep comparing and contrasting the two, the SCCS and the Matsanjeni Union. Even the latter suffered the same fate, though when the SCCS closed down without any part of the loan repaid, farmers in south east Swaziland began in 1981, to consider seriously the idea of making their cooperative there take on some serious projects and their prosecution until 1985, when office bearers were kicked out of office on accusations of corruption.<sup>61</sup>

Cooperatives in general, and in particular those which form the focus of the discussion here, were without direction just like the Department of Cooperatives to which they were all affiliated and answerable. Having been constituted in 1963, with a purpose to foster the cooperative spirit in farmers throughout the territory, the department failed to make any head-way just as the SCCS and the Matsanjeni Union had done.<sup>62</sup> While one takes into

account that the department had a policy which guided it in as far as what its obligations were, the main problem was the practical aspect of its programme, that is, the implementation of the ideals was a completely different story from that of the policy. Personal interests loomed larger than those of the public for which the Cooperative Department had been established. The awareness of the Department of Cooperatives of its duties to national cooperative unions was demonstrated by its advocacy of, and government's due support for, the establishment of the Cooperative Department and Education Centre (CODEC) at the Ezulwini Valley in 1979.<sup>63</sup> CODEC was one of the support organisations which cooperatives had required very desperately because it provided the relevant skills cooperatives needed to function effectively where the office was staffed with less selfish individuals. Apart from providing the managerial skills, the college also went a long way towards providing skills in book-keeping and accounts, and that was the area where the source of division lay. However, one major point to note is that keeping accounts books in proper order is one thing and keeping a faithful eye on the funds of the cooperative, was yet another.

It was in the early 1980s, a few years after the college had been in operation and had produced some candidates to serve in their respective cooperative centres that the problem of the embezzlement of cooperative funds went on uncurbed. At that level the method of doing it was even more sophisticated because those who were responsible to keep the books already knew what auditors looked for and what were the symptoms of a sick book-keeping accountant and how auditors detected the embezzlement of funds.<sup>64</sup> However, the embezzlement of money by trained accountants, who were aware of their responsibilities and what shame the auditors' reports might bring upon their reputation and profession had some restraining effect on the extent to which they stole the money of their organisations. But in spite of that the degree of unity among the farmers in the Matsanjeni Union remained at its erstwhile lowest ebb. Even though one might sound as though the question of money mishandling was the cause of the failure of cooperatives to function according to their

constitution and objectives, there were yet other factors which had a far more stronger influence in the opposite direction than the latter factor.

In conclusion, the discussion has focussed upon the weaknesses of the Matsanjeni Union, by looking at its sudden appearance and the problems which led to its failure to function. Along these lines the discussion also examined the appearance of yet another cooperative which aimed to absorb all other cooperatives to avoid competition among the consumers for the limited cotton market, the SCCS. It is very hard to tell what prompted the leaders of these unions to propose such objectives because there was no concerted attempt to adhere to them for the sake of their fulfilment. However, whatever the objective for their formation, it seems that the leaders, most of whom were rich entrepreneurs, wanted to use these organisations to promote their interests. The multiplicity of investment opportunities created by trade led to the corruption of most the rich farmers who wanted to exploit cooperatives, and this in turn led to the failure of the cooperatives to hold together and realise their objectives.

#### NOTES

1. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 20 October, 1980; and Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 15 May, 1983.
2. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 21 August, 1982; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 12 May, 1983; Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 12 May, 1983.
3. Sna 3172b Lovett report on cotton growing in south east Swaziland, 21 September, 1956; interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983.
4. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Simon Kunene, Sitilo, 15 July, 1983; David Sitsebe, Nsalitje, 15 July, 1983.

5. Sna 3172b Lovett report on problems of securing grower confidence in the arrangement to buy cotton in south east Swaziland, 31 July, 1956.
6. Interview Josiah Vilakati, Sifuntaneni, 15 July, 1983; Sibhebhu Mahlalela, Makhava, 21 October, 1983; and David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 21 October, 1983.
7. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 15 July, 1983; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 21 October, 1983.
8. Sna 3172b Lovett to Government Secretary on the Matsanjeni Cotton Farmers' Cooperative, 15 March, 1957.
9. Interview David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980.
10. Interview Albert Vialakti, Matsanjeni, 21 September, 1982; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 21 September, 1982; Simon Sihlongonyane, Nsalitje, 21 September, 1982.
11. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Southern District Extension Officer report on the marketing of cotton, 31 July, 1968; interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 15 July, 1983; Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 15 July, 1983.
12. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Southern District Extension Officer report on the marketing of cotton, 31 July, 1964.
13. Interview David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 20 October, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 12 May, 1983.
14. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Johannes Nzuza, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 29 November, 1985.
15. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Agricultural Demonstrator to Extension Officer on problems of cotton marketing in Southern District, 25 June, 1967.
16. Sna Box 15 File 18/1 Clark to Extension Officer in Southern District on possibility of buying all cotton in Matsanjeni, 14 March, 1966.
17. Sna Box 17 File 18/13 Minutes of the Cotton Board on the technical problems of cotton growing, 13 May, 1969; Report of the Ministry of Agriculture on the objectives of forming a cotton board, 23 July, 1968.

18. Sna Box 17 File 18/12 Ministry of Agriculture report on the effect of the Cotton Board on cotton cultivation, 31 December, 1969.
19. Sna Box 17 File 18/13 Minutes of the Cotton Board on the achievements of Matsanjeni Union on cotton cultivation, 19 May, 1970.
20. Sna Box 18 File 27 Minutes of CCU on the achievements of the Matsanjeni Union, 25 June, 1970.
21. Sna Box 18 File 27 Minutes of CCU on the achievements of the Matsanjeni Union, 25 June, 1970; interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983.
22. Sna Box 17 File 18/13/1 Southern District Extension Officer report on new cotton varieties, 20 June, 1971.
23. Sna Box 68 File 89<sup>2</sup> Clark to Southern District Extension Officer on the marketing of cotton in Matsanjeni, 16 August, 1972.
24. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1983; Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 9 June, 1984; Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 9 June, 1984; Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 21 October, 1984.
25. Sna Box 68 File 89<sup>2</sup> Minutes of CCU on the promotion of cooperative societies, the Matsanjeni Union case, 25 August, 1973; interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 12 May, 1983; Simeone Sikhosana, Makhava, 12 May, 1983.
26. Interview David Xaba, Sitilo, 20 July, 1982; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 July, 1982; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 20 July, 1982.
27. Interview Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 August, 1987; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 16 September, 1987; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 16 September, 1987; and Samson Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 16 September, 1987.
28. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 16 September, 1987; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 16 September, 1987; and Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 19 September, 1987.
29. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1984; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 12 May, 1984; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 29 August, 1984; David Xaba, Sitilo, 29 August, 1984; and Samuel Vilane, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984.



30. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984; Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984; Amos Matse, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984; and Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 29 August, 1984.
31. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984; and Samson Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 29 August, 1984.
32. Interview Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 20 October, 1980; Samuel Vilane, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; and Philemon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980.
33. Interview Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 12 June, 1983; Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 12 June, 1983; Abel Gamedze, Nsalitje, 12 June, 1983; Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 12 June, 1983; and Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 12 June, 1983.
34. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 1980; Simon Dlamini, Sitilo, 12 May, 1983.
35. Interview Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 29 November, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 29 November, 1980; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 29 November, 1980, 12 February, 1983, and these were among those who withdrew their membership because they were suspicious of the office being ridden with corruption.
36. Interview Josiah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1980; Alpheus Mahlalela, Nsalitje, 12 May, 1983.
37. CCU Records File 7 Report of CCU on the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society, Ltd., 16 November, 1981; File CCU/HQ/53 Report of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society on its members and its objectives, 11 August, 1977.
38. CCU Records File CCU/HQ/53 Report of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society Ltd. on the progress of its programme, 16 November, 1981; interview Absalom Dlamini, Deputy Commissioner for CCU, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987.
39. Interview Duma Mabuza, Mbabane, Swazi Plaza, 21 September, 1980; CCU Records File CCU/HQ/53 Report of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society, 16 November, 1981; interview M.J. Clark, Cotton Board, Manzini, 20 July, 1980.
40. CCU Records File CCU/HQ/53 Report of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society on progress in its promotion of cotton production, 16 November, 1981; interview M.J. Clark, Cotton Board, Manzini, 20 July, 1980.

41. Interview Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 24 November, 1987; Ndawonye Sikhondze, Maloma Store, 2 January, 1988.
42. Interview Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987.
43. Interview Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 28 November, 1987.
44. Interview Ndawonye Sikhondze, Lulakeni, 28 July, 1985; Abel Gumbi, Lubuli, 28 July, 1985; Solomon Mahlobo, Lubuli, 28 July, 1985; Samson Gumbi, Lubuli, 28 July, 1985.
45. Interview Samson Gumbi, Lubuli, 28 July, 1985; Solomon Mahlobo, Lubuli, 28 July, 1985; Almon Linda, Lubuli, 10 August, 1985.
46. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 29 November, 1987; Almon Linda, Lubuli, 29 November, 1987; David Xaba, Sitilo, 2 December, 1987; and P.W. Meyer, Mhlatuze, 21 December, 1987.
47. Interview David Xaba, Sitilo, 29 August, 1984; Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 29 August, 1984; Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 8 March, 1985; Aaron Matse, Matsanjeni, 8 March, 1985; and Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 16 May, 1985.
48. Interview M.J. Clark, Cotton Board, Manzini, 20 July, 1980; Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987.
49. This view was expressed by M.J. Clark, Cotton Board, Manzini, 20 July, 1980; Simon Khumalo, Tibiyo Offices, Lozitha, 13 August, 1980.
50. This statement is based on the fact that Clark and Cotona Cotton Ginning Company have several investments in South Africa, and shares with some of the manufacturing houses in Johannesburg in particular. Interview Titus Kunene, Matsapha Industrial Site, 23 August, 1980; M.J. Mcetshwa, Phongolo, 11 August, 1985. Both of these informants are managers of Cotona and Clark respectively.
51. See B. Warren, Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism (London: Verso, 1980) pp. 143-185; W. Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972); I. Wallerstein, "The Three Stages of African Involvement in the World Economy", in P. Gutkind & I. Wallerstein (eds) The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications, 1976) pp. 30-57.

52. This fact is made clearer in a recent article, S. Askin, "The Sanctions Busting Boom: a worldwide network supports South Africa's fastest growing Export industry", Southern Africa: Political and Economic Monthly, no. 9, June, 1988, pp. 10-11.
53. Interview Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 12 May, 1983; Almon Hlophe, Lavumisa, 29 July, 1987; Mandla Mkhonta, Sitilo, 24 August, 1987; Luke Hlophe, Sitilo, 24 August, 1987.
54. Interview Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 29 November, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 29 November, 1980; Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 12 May, 1983; Samson Vilane, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1984.
55. Interview Elliot Shiba Matsanjeni, 29 May, 1986; John Vilakati, Makhava, 29 May, 1986; Samuel Vilakati, Makhava, 29 May, 1987; John Sikhosana, Makhava, 29 May, 1987.
56. Interview M.J. Clark, Manzini, 20 July, 1980; Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987; CCU Records File 7 Report of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Society on its cotton project in the low-veld, 9 September, 1981.
57. See D. Bolton, Nationalisation: A Road to Socialism? The Lessons of Tanzania (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985) pp. 63-81.
58. Interview M.J. Clark, Manzini, 20 July, 1980; Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987; Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 26 August, 1987.
59. Peter Kilby, Industrialisation In An Open Economy: Nigeria, 1945-1966 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) pp.8-25; Michael Watts (ed) State, Oil, and Agriculture in Nigeria, (Berkeley: University of California, 1987) pp. 58-84.
60. This point was expressed by the disappointed Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 26 August, 1986; and Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 29 November, 1987, who emphasised that his union in the 1950s had been disrupted by people such as these who lacked any serious purpose in the creation of cooperatives.
61. Interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980; David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 20 October, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 20 July, 1982; Samson Vilane, Matsanjeni, 20 July, 1982.
62. This statement is based on evidence which points to the fact that there has been only one union, the Matsanjeni Union which was formed specifically to promote cotton cultivation since about 1954 to the present.

63. CCU Report by Knut Odegaard, "An Introduction to Cooperatives with Special Reference to Small Farmers' Needs in Swaziland", Mbabane, 1979; interview Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1985; Absalom Dlamini, Mbabane, 29 July, 1987; and Wilson Ginindza, CCU, Manzini, 29 July, 1987.

64. This view was expressed by some of those farmers who were disillusioned by the operation of the MCU Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 29 November, 1980; Samson Vilane, Matsanjeni, 29 November, 1980; David Xaba, Sitilo, 20 July, 1982; Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 15 June, 1983; Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 11 February, 1984.

## CONCLUSION

The initial collusion of the Colonial State in Swaziland with the settlers to ensure that cotton cultivation remained a settler preserve proved a failure. The two had hoped for a successful employment of the capitalist mode of production to produce cotton, the demand of which had been made elastic in Great Britain by the decision of the United States of America, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to process most of its cotton into textile commodities there, and export only an unusually smaller amount of raw cotton to Great Britain. In reaction to this the British Cotton Growing Association (B.C.G.A.), formed in 1902 in Manchester, took up the task of meeting the demand. For the BCGA the question of who produced it between the settlers and the indigenous growers of the empire, was immaterial. However, in Southern Africa, settlers had seen themselves as being more deserving than the indigenes to grow the crop. This was the main cause for the Colonial State and the settlers to attempt to turn the indigenous growers into a labour reserve in Swaziland. They met, however, with very little success.

Consequently, after 1910, some settler farmers employed the South African system of commercial agriculture of share-cropping or tenant farming.<sup>1</sup> The gist of this system lay in the fact that Swazi growers used a pre-capitalist mode of production to produce cotton cheaply and sell to the settler farmers at rock bottom prices. The latter listed the crop acquired from Swazi growers under their names, hence there are no archival indications that Swazi growers produced cotton already by the early 1910s. In some parts of the territory there were cases of Swazi growers who produced cotton on their own initiatives, but since the Colonial State and some settlers did not approve of it because they had viewed them as a labour force, chiefly authority was also used by the Colonial State and the settlers in an attempt to nip in the bud such a development. Some chiefs were opposed to cotton growing because it encouraged a measure of economic independence among their subjects, something which was

uncommon in a Swazi setting. Some chiefs also thought that cotton production would take the place of food production yet the latter deserved more attention because it was the backbone of the national economy. Some chiefs feared that cotton pests would spread and harm other crops such as foodcrops. Already the demand for food exceeded the supply hence chiefly insistence to concentrate more on food production. Being aware of this conflict, the Colonial State and the settlers reinforced it against the attempts of the Empire Cotton Growing Committee, formed in England in 1917, to promote cotton production in the empire. However, in spite of the operational principles of the capitalist system of production and the revived market price of cotton, some settlers continued to rely on the pre-capitalist mode of production to produce cotton through some Swazi growers.

In Swaziland, settlers displayed the South African features of settler economy, where earlier in the 1910s, as noted by Colin Bundy, political factors played a vital role in throttling African endeavour in order to protect the settler economy.<sup>2</sup> One would not be running headway into generalisation to suggest that the role of the South African state in foiling African efforts in the early 1910s served as one of the factors which made settlers in Swaziland seek the support of the State after World War One to frustrate Swazi endeavour in cotton cultivation. However, due to the experience of the B.C.G.A. in the tropics, where African production of cash crops was prominent, settlers received very little open support from the latter to frustrate Swazi production of cotton. In Uganda in particular, European settlers were beaten hands down by African resistance to be turned into a labour reservoir.<sup>3</sup> However, African resistance had received some strong backing from the Colonial State in Uganda, which made the Ugandan experience different from those of other parts of the empire. Swaziland falls into the same category with Kenya as noted by Anderson and Throup,<sup>4</sup> where the capitalist mode of production triumphed, but in Swaziland it lasted for only a while due to the impact of the 1929 slump which helped to restrict the settlers' role in the cash crop business.

Chiefly authority over the produce of their subjects and control over its distribution was being eroded by the influence of trade. The Chiefs' argument that cotton exhausted the soil faster than other crops, and spread insects which were harmful to other crops, only received the backing of the Colonial State in so far as it helped the latter to turn Swazi growers into a labour force for the settler economy. It was after the World Slump of 1929-31 that the collusion between the Colonial State, settlers and chiefs against Swazi production of cotton disintegrated sharply. What emerges here is that economics determined the course of events, even political events because it was economics even in the First World War period that created the collusion between the state, settlers and chiefs to turn Swazi growers into a labour force. By the same token, in 1932, the Colonial State and the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, formed in September 1921, colluded to subvert the traditional authority of the chiefs over the control of Swazi traditional economy. For the first time since its inception in 1904, cotton was introduced for production by the Swazi in Swazi Areas in 1932. Here the archaic lineage mode of production postulated that elders in some African communities determined the tempo of the political, economic and social lifestyle of their junior people, but already this system showed some contradictions because it could no longer be argued that chiefly authority over the economy of their subjects was still intact and effective to maintain the *status quo*.

The act of the Colonial State to undermine the political power of chiefs over the control of the rural economy by forcing upon the growers the cultivation of cotton agrees with the Marxist concept that economics is a determinant of all events be they political or otherwise. Similar findings were made in Kenya where Anderson, Throup and Lonsdale,<sup>5</sup> revealed how the Colonial State supplanted a settler economy they had created themselves by supporting African endeavours at commodity production during times when the settler economy could not handle the problems which militated against them. It was particularly during the depressions of 1920-22, and 1929, that African commodity production, to meet the market demand, was promoted because

the settler economy was at its lowest ebb due to the unprofitability of the market price. But when the market price of the commodities was revived, the settler economy received state assistance yet again at the expense of the African sector. In fact, the impact of economics upon political factors was even made more elaborate by Claude Meillassoux in the case of the Ivory Coast when he studied the Guru and their participation in trade.<sup>6</sup>

Yet another theme which was important to take into consideration was the migration of labour power to industrial South Africa. Dualism theory which was utilised by Lewis<sup>7</sup> to explain this type of labour migration proved only relevant here when used to analyse those cases where heads of families migrated for short periods. Even then migration was not pre-determined; rather it was accidental upon the failure of the crops of the affected growers. The labour power was fully employed and involved in the production circle both in summer and winter. Lewis had postulated an export of surplus labour, whose wages from migration could be invested productively in the rural economy. But here most migrants could hardly save enough money for investment in farming, in particular due to the low level of wages, a point well treated by H. Wolpe,<sup>8</sup> in the South African case where Swazi migrants were employed both on settler farms and mines. This theme runs through the study, particularly from the duration of World War One, when its magnitude worried settlers to the extent of lobbying government to discourage it for their benefit.

From the duration of the Second World War, and particularly at the end of 1945 onwards, due to the changing market conditions and the expanding investment opportunities, Hogendorn's version of the vent-for-surplus model<sup>9</sup> showed that while the land mass allowed for more of the physical expansion of cotton cultivation, labour power was already precarious especially in the sparsely populated cotton growing area of south east Swaziland. But the impact of trade was reflected by the demographic shift from some temperate climatic zones of the territory to the low-veld of south east Swaziland, especially in the



early 1950s. Trade opportunities were not confined to cotton, but affected other crops hence various markets were opened up for the purchase of these crops. The vent-for-surplus theory helped to emphasise the significance of these multiple trading opportunities, and also of the opening up of dense forests in south east Swaziland for the production of crops which enjoyed a viable market both locally and externally. Due to the expansion of the volume of trade, the infrastructure was also affected positively to help facilitate communication and the transportation of trade goods. But these trade opportunities failed to promote a sense of interdependence between areas which had a more tropical type of climate and those with a temperate one, which could have helped to reduce the amount of dependence upon commodities that were grown outside the country, such as the importation of maize and maize products from South Africa.

An investment in cotton cultivation also meant some corresponding improvement in cattle-rearing because some farmers used cattle as capital to finance cotton cultivation. Improving cattle-rearing involved cross-breeding the traditional Nguni stock with the modern and commercial breed of the Afrikaner and the Brahman. However, not every cotton grower could meet the expenses involved here no matter how willing he might have been to maximise his profits by improving his traditional breed of cattle. While trade opened up many opportunities for the cotton grower in south east Swaziland, responding to these opportunities was determined by one's financial ability. But while the vent-for-surplus theory, as propounded by Hogendorn,<sup>10</sup> which postulated a boom in the affected economies due to the improvement of the infrastructure and expansion of investment avenues, fitted well into the south east Swaziland case, Gunner Myrdal's concept of economic development as discussed by Walter Elkan was also useful in pointing to social differentiation by suggesting that wherever economic growth occurred it did not benefit everybody to the same degree.<sup>11</sup> It was in the late 1970s and early 1980s that cattle-keepers, particularly those of the hybrid of the Brahman, required farms to facilitate cattle-rearing and only a handful of

them were successful. In the process these trade and investment opportunities perpetuated social differentiation that was already underway in rural south east Swaziland.

Social differentiation in cotton growing<sup>in</sup> south east Swaziland was facilitated by brokers' provision of credit facilities to the growers. This brokerage varied from one farmer to the next, with successful farmers receiving the lion's share of broker finance. This gross inequality in credit distribution was continued in the 1960s by the Cotton Board, Swazi Bank, and CCU in their responses to the needs of the farmers for technical advice and credit facilities respectively. Farmers who knew how to approach these organisations for finance, and who could use their expanded cotton output to bargain, received more technical advice and finance. Financial assistance helped some growers to purchase private farms which led to some expansion in their cotton output. Tractors were purchased and used to boost the bargaining power of successful entrepreneurs in that brokers competed for their expanded cotton and continued to pump more finance to them at the expense of less successful entrepreneurs hence social differentiation. Broker support of cash commodity production was also noted in Ghana by R. Southall and J. Miles and others which bears affinity to that of south east Swaziland.<sup>12</sup> In Tanganyika, J. Iliffe noted that social differentiation resulted from Chagga successful exploitation of trade opportunities some of which were presented by contacts with Europeans and western education.<sup>13</sup> Even there not every grower partaking of these opportunities benefited to the same degree; the ability to exploit the opportunities determined the level of success of each producer.

However, expansion in cotton cultivation per grower also meant the expansion of the labour force at a time when labour was shrinking. The shortage of labour was yet another factor which exacerbated the financial problems of some rich entrepreneurs. In order to resolve it, the use of technological factors, such as herbicides, used to kill weeds, became the solution, aircraft for spraying and a harvester to pick cotton were made labour substitutes. Yet other equipment was used to cut

down the cotton plants at the end of the harvest period to avoid the ratooning of the crop which led to the multiplication of insects harmful to the development of cotton cultivation. These were among the factors which pushed some of the entrepreneurs out of the cotton business by 1985, due to the huge debts they created with some of the financial institutions. However, some farmers partially solved their labour problem by the use of Mozambican refugees.

Most of the prosperous farmers perceived the need in the mid 1960s to revive their cooperative which was already more than a decade old. In their justification they argued that they wanted to protect the interests of the small scale farmers against broker exploitation, when in reality they wanted to use this organisation to entrench themselves in cotton cultivation. In 1977, yet another nation-wide cooperative was formed with similar objectives, though it came with one which appeared more grandiose, most of these objectives were first and foremost meant to promote cotton cultivation in the low-lying parts of the country. However, divisive tendencies plagued the unions and made nonsense the aims for which they were formed. But there were suspicions that the divisive tendencies within all these unions were sown by outside forces, such as cotton consumers whose interests were being threatened by all these programmes.

It was not possible to explore all the areas of economic growth following the expansion of trade in cotton in south east Swaziland. One of the areas which this study overlooked was the role of women in the expansion of trade in cotton, particularly from the 1980s, when the United Nations sponsored vegetable producer cooperatives which were formed specifically for the benefit of women. Vegetables were and are still grown during the harvest time, and it would be interesting to investigate the impact of these projects on the harvest of the crop. One of the major questions to investigate would be the method used by the farmers who rely on family labour to substitute female labour at harvest time. This becomes crucial in view of the fact that women have other duties of their cooperatives to attend to while at the same

time they must give a hand in the cotton harvest. It would be equally important also to establish the degree of economic independence such projects have afforded the womenfolk, and the social impact on the families that have been affected by these projects.

### NOTES

1. M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds) Vol. 2, 1971 op. cit. pp. 120-136.
2. C. Bundy, 1979, op. cit.
3. C. Youe, (1978) op. cit. pp. 313; V. Harlow, et al (eds) History of East Africa vol. 2. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965) pp. 402-475.
4. D. Anderson & D. Throup, 'Africans and Agricultural Production in Colonial Kenya: The Myth of The War as a Watershed', Journal of African History, 26 (1985) pp. 327-331; see also J. Lonsdale & B. Berman, "Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895-1914", Journal of African History, 20 4 (1979) pp. 488-490; E.A. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change 1919-1939 (London: Heinemann, 1971) pp. 168-170; R.W. Wolff, The Economics of Colonialism: Britain and Kenya, 1870-1930 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974) pp. 68-117.
5. Ibid.
6. C. Meillassoux, "From Reproduction to Production: A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology", Economy and Society, 1 1 (1972) pp. 93-104; E. Terray, Marxism and Primitive Societies (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1972) pp. 93-184.
7. As discussed in G. Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective: A Study of the proletarianisation of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia", Journal of Development Studies, 3. (1970) pp. 197-234.
8. H. Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid", Economy and Society, 1 (1972) p. 434.
9. J.S. Hogendorn, 1976, op. cit. pp. 15-28; \_\_\_\_\_, 1975, op. cit. pp. 283-328.

10. Ibid.
11. W. Elkan, 1973, op. cit. pp. 49-91.
12. R. Southall, 1978, op. cit. pp. 185-211; J. Miles, 1978, op. cit. pp. 152-153.
13. J. Iliffe, 1979, op. cit. pp. 274-289.

## RESEARCH SOURCES

### Oral Sources:

Here will be listed names and places of the people who were interviewed with some brief notes on who they were and why they were chosen for interviews.

M.J. Clark; and Tom Jele of the Cotton Board, Manzini, 20, 25 July, 1980; and 21 October, 1986. Clark was Chief Executive Officer for the Cotton Board before Jele localised the post late in 1980.

Aaron Dlamini, Nsalitje, 25 August, 1987. He lived in the area from the beginning of the cultivation of cotton. However, his own cotton fields were limited by both lack of money and the labour intensive nature of the crop. He was helpful though as far as answering the questions asked him.

Absalom Dlamini (Mbabane); Wilson Ginindza (Manzini), 29 July, 1987. These were the officers of CCU and were interviewed on the organisation.

Bernard Dlamini, Sitilo, 23 October, 1980. Bernard grew cotton due to the absence of alternative crops that could withstand the drought conditions of the area. He could not move to go and settle elsewhere because the area supported cattle-rearing well compared to other parts of the territory. He wanted to multiply his cattle.

David Dlamini, Ngwavuma, 23 July, 20 October, 1980; 27 March, 12 July, 1982; 15 June, 10 August, 1983; 29 September, 13 December, 1984; 15 May, 1 November, 1985. Being one of the pioneers of cotton cultivation in the area, he was very helpful in imparting some useful information about the development of cotton and its expansion to other growers and areas.

Elliot Dlamini, Manzini, 11 August, 1980. He worked for the Swazi Bank in Manzini as a loan manager and was in charge of farmer's loans.

Gali Dlamini, Ngololweni, 20 June, 1986 was born in the area. Though he did not grow cotton, he had observed the developments with interest and recalled some of the crucial problems which hinged on production and marketing.

Ida Dlamini, Nkutjini, 23 July, 1980; Samson and Simon Dlamini, Sitilo, 20 October, 29 November, 1980; 12 May, 1983; 19 September, 1987. They grew up in the area and possessed some valuable history of cotton cultivation though their direct physical involvement in its cultivation was limited by the fact that it was labour intensive.

Madami Dlamini, Alfred Mabuza, Mafutseni, 28 November, 1980; 14 February, 1982. Apart from narrating their history of cotton cultivation, they also reported on H. Hutchinson, B. Manana and Bhongoza Masango who were forces behind the introduction of cotton into Swazi Areas.

Madolo Dlamini, Mbulungwane, 16 August, 1980; Samuel Simelane Mgamudze, 20, 29 October, 29 November, 1980; Mandla Dlamini, Sandleni, 16 June, 1986; Majaha Mavuso, Mbulungwane, 4 February, 1982. Their names were given by Ephraim Tsabedze because they were thought to have been familiar with the activities of Pastor Paul Thwala of Sandleni, and that conclusion was based on the fact that they were regular church attendants at Sandleni.

Msunduzi Dlamini, Malta Mgabhi, Nsalitje, 19 December, 1985. These two were neighbours who were involved in cotton growing but only from the 1960s, when maize production could no longer be relied upon due to adverse weather conditions.

Ntombazana Dlamini, Ngudzeni, 5, 25 March, 21 July 1979, 6 August, 1980. She was wife of Ephraim Dlamini. She related information both on her husband and her brother E.P. Dlodlu of Ngololweni. When she was contacted in 1980 she was already sickly and very little was gained from the discussion then. She died later in that year.

Samson Dlamini, Sitilo, 29 November, 1980; 29 August, 1984; Lomazala Dlamini, Hluthi, 11 February, 1986. These two possessed some very useful information on the history of cotton cultivation and narrated their own practical experiences with the business.

Simon Dlamini, David Sithebe, Nsalitje, 20 June, 12 July, 1982; 20 October, 1983; 15 August, 1985. These were cousins who grew up together and in the 1950s they built their homes close to each other. They grew cotton and reared cattle because the latter supported the former and vis versa.

Venn Dlamini, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985; 16 November, 1986; 29 July, 1987. He grew cotton and kept a large herd of cattle which he sold from time to time to raise money to finance his cotton farming.

Zablon Dlamini, Matsanjeni, 25 August, 1987. He arrived in the area in the mid 1950s to rear cattle and grow cotton as sources of income. However, he grew very little cotton due to ill health and old age.

Petros Dlodlu and Petros Dlamini, Majozi Zulu, Maphumzane Dlodlu, Mlindazwe, 23 June, 11 August, 20 October, 24 November, 1980; 17 May, 18, 29 July, 1987. These lived in Hlushwana at the beginning of cotton cultivation and grew the crop themselves. Later they moved to Mlindazwe which possessed more grazing grounds and supported a strong cattle-rearing economy upon which cotton cultivation depended.

Mafa Dlodlu, Mtsambama, 9 June, 1982. He grew up in the area and knew about the early cotton experiments by both Swazi growers and European settlers because he worked on the farm of one of the settlers in the area. Later he grew it on a small field.

Elaine Dlodlu, Ngololweni, 18 August, 1980; 11 August, 1982; 20, 26 June, 1986; 12 October, 27 November, 1987. She is wife of E.P. Dlodlu who grew cotton from the duration of World War One. She recalled most of the developments which surrounded cotton growing. One of her brothers partook of the Mahonti cotton venture. She related how it was prosecuted. She has since remained in the area, and her home is at the top of the valley.

Philemon Fakudze, Macetsheni, 21 July, 20 October, 11 December, 1982; 26 March, 1983. As a nephew of Samuel Fakudze, Philemon was questioned on the activities of his uncle because he lived with him and partook of the cotton project himself. As a participant and relative who was directly involved with the project Philemon could answer most of the questions with confidence.

Josiah and Elijah Gamedze, Nsalitje, 23 October, 29 November, 1980; 16 November, 1986; 29 July, 1987. Alfred Gamedze, Nsalitje, 27 March, 1982; 12 June, 1983; 12, 15 October, 29 November, 1985; 16 November, 1986. John Gamedze, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985; Moses Gamedze, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1986;



Aaron Shongwe, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982; Matsapha Gwebu, Nsalitje, 13 December, 1984. These growers were indigenous to the area and had grown up in the area on a farm which later became their settlement. Their history as cotton growers began when they were squatters on the private farm. Later when the area became a Swazi settlement they grew cotton for themselves.

Simon Gamedze, Lukhula, 29 July, 1982. He grew cotton on a small scale because he was hampered by the absence of marketing facilities.

Abel, Petros, Samson, Gumbi; Solomon Mahlobo; Almon Linda, Lubulini, 16 November, 1984; 28 July, 10 August, 1985; 29 November, 1987. These were questioned on cotton production in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Lubulini. Some of them, like Abel, were doing well as cotton cultivators. He operated a butchery in addition to cotton cultivation. He also owned cattle which numbered in several hundreds.

Almon Hlophe, Lavumisa, 29 July, 1987; Luke Hlophe, Sitilo, 24 August, 1987. In addition to growing cotton on their small holdings these growers also worked on Nkwanyana's farm for the maintenance of their tractors.

Simon Khumalo, Lozitha Tibiyo Offices, 19 July, 1980. He was questioned on the investment plans of his company towards the promotion of cotton cultivation.

Titus Kunene, Manager of Cotona, Matsapha, 21 July, 11, 23 August, 1980. He was questioned on the progress made by his company in promoting cotton, its problems and solutions.

A.E. Language, Nhlangano, 14 July, 1986; 21 February, 1987. She is wife of A.E. Language who began to buy cotton in Goedegun in the late 1920s and carried on with that trade well into the 1950s when he was outclassed and forced out of the trade by Ralli Brothers and Company.

Alice and Lofana Mabuza, Nietgegund, 17 July, 1983. These two claimed that they attempted to grow cotton in the 1920s but stopped after they had been discouraged by some settlers who complained that Swazi growers stole their cotton to boost their meagre output.

Adam Mabuza, James Mamba, (Dwaleni), Ida Mkhonta (Thunzini), Melashwa Shongwe (Nietgegund), Madala Nhleko,

(Ngwane), 7 September, 1982; 15 March, 1985. They had some interesting information on the conflicts which existed between European farmers and Swazi growers on the allegations that the latter stole their counterparts' cotton to swell their meagre output.

Duma Mabuza, Mbabane, 25 October, 1980. This one was employed as an accountant of the Swaziland Cotton Cooperative Union at Big Bend. He claimed knowledge of the problems which grounded the cooperative.

Majuba Mabuza, and Abel Shongwe, Nsalitje, 20 October, 1980. Though they lived in the area by the time cotton was introduced, the extent of their cotton cultivation was limited by lack of capital and by the fact that the crop was labour intensive.

Albion Mafu, Bulungu, 20 September, 1984. He was a member of Samuel's church and was helpful in providing answers to some questions but his memory did not hold all the crucial facts which were needed to write his former pastor's history.

Sibhebhu Mahlalela, Makhava, 21 October, 1983; Alpheus Mahlalela, Nsalitje, 12 May, 1983. They argued that climatic conditions forced them to grow cotton, otherwise they reared cattle as a source of income, and grew their own food instead of buying it.

Nganga Mamba, Ngudzeni, 6, 18 August, 1980. He was asked about the history of cotton cultivation by Ephraim Dlamini of the same area.

Mzila Mamba, Lobhengula Shongwe, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985. These grew cotton from the late 1950s, but had no concrete knowledge of the problems of other farmers apart from theirs and those of relatives.

Albert Manana, Petros Sithebe, Sitilo, 20 October, 1980; 26 September, 27 December, 1987. These three growers had their roots in the area, recalled the origins of cotton cultivation, the problems of its production and the solutions. They made some major improvement in its cultivation and accumulation of property later.

Brian M. Manana and Dinah, Lwandle, 20 July, 11 August, 11 September, 1980; 30 December, 1982; 17 June, 30 December, 1986. Manana, along with his wife also possessed some valuable information about the introduction of cotton into Swazi areas in

the 1930s. Selected by H. Hutchinson, he was employed to visit those parts of the country which were suited to cotton to discuss the implementation of the project with chiefs with a view to persuade them to cooperate.

Luke Mangwe, Tshedze, 28 November, 1980. His involvement in cotton and tobacco trade with European farmers at Goedegun was helpful because he could provide some very rare information on the problems of marketing these crops.

Abel Maseko, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984; Samuel Motsa, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1986; Amos Jele, Matsanjeni, 11 February, 1986; Mahhusha Jele, Sikhhalasebhodzwe, 11 February, 1986. They were lukewarm cotton growers who avoided its expansion due to lack of capital. They also kept cattle on a large scale, in the region of 60 herds each.

Elliot and Josiah Masuku, Albion Nxumalo, Jotham Simelane, Mgamudze, 20, 29 October, 1980; 31 July, 1982; 26 August, 1984; 15 May, 1985; 12 May, 21 June, 1986; 8 July, 1987. At a meeting convened by Jotham to facilitate my interviews with these people general questions were asked, and later specific ones probing into the growers' individual cultivation of cotton were asked. Most of these people could recall only the recent past and that did not involve the history of the introduction of cotton in the area.

Mavis Masuku, Mary Gwebu and Mahova Lugogo, Moses Lugogo, Aaron Nxumalo, Ngololweni, 18 October, 1980; 20, 26 June, 1986; 12 October, 1987; 11 April, 1988. These were selected due to their history of contact with deceased relatives who were familiar with the events. The history of cotton had been narrated to them by their parents.

David Mazibuko, Mpolonjeni, 29 July, 1982; Lot Ndlovu, Mgamudze, 31 July, 1982. These combined cotton with maize and due to this division of the labour they did not do well in either of the two.

Alpheus Maziya, Mafutseni, 20 September, 1980; Madliza Nkambule, Kwabhudla, 22 September, 1980; Bernard Shongwe, Mafutseni, 20 September, 1980. They were asked about the introduction of cotton <sup>by</sup> H. Hutchinson into the area and the problems which militated against the project.

Mhlupheki Masuku, Luve; Lobamba Masuku, Lulakeni, 27 December, 1982; 13 February 1983. He lived in the area and worked on Wallis' farm to earn money to pay his taxes and meet other needs.

Amos Mathe, Madlangampisi, 17 January, 1983. He was one of the early Swazi labourers on settler cotton plantations in the area.

Aaron Matse, Mhubulwane Matse, Amos Matse, Albion Matse, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 20, 21, 27 October, 16 November, 1980; 20 June, 1982; 9, 12 June, 1983; 21 March, 21, 29 August, 1984; 8 March, 25 May, 1985. These were brothers, and among them Amos was the first to grow the crop and even to purchase a tractor to enhance his cotton cultivation. He too operated other businesses such as a trading store and a butchery. They owned cattle from their cultivation of cotton.

M.J. Mcetshwa, Phongolo, 11 August, 21 October, 1985. He was Manager for J.L. Clark ginnery at Phongolo at the time he was interviewed. However, he could not answer questions which were based on the activities of the company in the 1950s because he was not there at that time.

P.W. Meyer, Mhlatuze, 20 October, 1980; 21 December, 1987. He was among the early growers to undertake cotton cultivation on a large scale. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Ralli Brother ginnery at Mhlatuze. Though he was uncooperative with the author during field studies, he gave some brief yet very useful information on the cotton cultivation in the lowveld of Swaziland.

Jerome Mhlungu, Hlushwana, 7 August, 1983; 11 February, 1984; 15, 17 August, 1985; 17 May, 1987. He arrived in the area in 1955 to grow cotton and rear cattle. He is also one of the rich farmers today.

Mandla Mkhonta, Sitilo, 24 August, 1987. He was helpful as far as providing information on the Matsanjeni Union and other cotton related issues.

Samson Mkhonta, Mgamudze 15 September, 1983; 15 May, 29 November, 1985; 11 February, 19 June, 1986. He was helpful in suggesting problems which he, as demonstrator, thought were an obstacle to the expansion of cotton in the region by the 1980s. He often agreed to come along with the writer to some farmers to

conduct interviews. In his presence even the least willing to answer the questions were intimidated to do so.

Almon Mlotsa, Adam Gamedze, Moses Musa, Mahosha Mamba, Lavumisa, 23 July, 20 October, 1980; 4 April, 1982; 15 May, 1985. Most of them were familiar with the problems of cotton cultivation experienced by their employer Nkwanyana.

Maganga Mlotsa, Maloma, and Lobamba Masuku, Lulakeni, 17 November and 27 December, 1982; Luke Shongwe, Lulakeni, 3 March, 1983 respectively. These were familiar with the history of cotton growing in the area, particularly that of Ndawonye Sikhondze and others.

Almon Mthembu, Sitilo, 27 December, 1985. He was involved in cotton production from the mid 1950s and was still growing it but on a limited scale.

Esaw Ndlangamandla, Ka Liba, 15 December, 1984, 20 June, 1986. He claimed that his age was more than 100 years, and nobody in the area could contradict him because all those who were asked about the validity of the things he said claimed that he was the most senior citizen in the area who knew most of the past more than anybody else. He also claimed that his herbalist skills were blessed by God through Rev Jackson of Mhlosheni Mission Station. The latter was also said to have inspired E.P. Dlodlu to undertake cotton cultivation in Ngololweni after the First World War. On that score he was very helpful in a number of ways.

Elma Ndlangamandla, Macala Mavuso, Muntu Nkosi, Mganwini, 18 July, 11 August, 1987. Even though they arrived in the area in the 1950s they had since been involved with cotton cultivation and knew the problems involved in the business.

Almon Ngcamphalala, Phonjwane, 11 September, 1984. He was a member of Samuel Fakudze's church and was helpful in providing some useful information on the pastor.

Joshua Ngozo, Logwaja Mamba, Pauline Mamba, Kuka Mamba, Lufu Nhleko, Ngudzeni, 5 March, 1979; 29 July, 6, August, 11 September, 1980; 19 November, 1986; 27 November, 1987. These were interviewed about Ephraim Dlamini. Some had assisted Ephraim by working on his cotton fields. Ngozo in particular was

even more helpful because he had lived with Ephraim and assisted him with cotton cultivation. Ngozo was Dlamini's nephew.

Almon and Petros Nkambule, Lavumisa, 29 July, 1982; 17 May, 1987; Amos Matsebula, Sitilo, 17 May, 1987; Phesheya Mhlongo, Hlushwana, 8 July, 1987; Abel Masuku, Mgamudze, 8 July, 1987; Mampondvo Kunene, Nsalitje, 29 July, 1987. These were involved in cotton cultivation and cattle rearing though progress in the former was poor due to lack of adequate capital to finance it.

Johannes Nkwanyana, Lavumisa, 23 July, 20, 28 October, 25 November, 1980; 15 June, 21 August, 1982; 5 March, 12 May, 15, 21 August, 15 September, 29 November, 1983; 12, 26, 30 August, 1984; 10, 15 May, 17, 27 August, 1985; 9, 19 May, 19 July, 26 August, 1986; 25, 26 August, 1987. He was born and brought up in the area, but went to school in Manzini where he also worked with the Catholic Mission Station as a shopkeeper and developed the skills of an entrepreneur. This skill also contributed to his success in that business. Today he owns many shops at Lavumisa, a restaurant, garage, and many other businesses, and he is the most successful of all the famers in the region.

Simon Noge, Swazi Bank, Manzini, 20 August, 1980. He was in charge of the loans given to farmers to finance their farming and therefore was familiar with the problems of finance administration.

Deacon Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 July, 21 August, 20, 29 October, 16, 29 November, 1980; 27 March, 31 July, 1982; 15 June, 10 August, 1983; 20 July, 29 September, 1984; 11, 15 August, 1985; 11 February, 11 March, 16 November, 1986; 17 May, 1987. He began to grow cotton in the early 1950s, two years after Albert Vilakati had started to cultivate the crop. He possessed a mine of cotton history.

Samuel Nsibande, Hlushwana, 23 June, 20, 21, 29, 30 October, 1980; 11 March, 12, 19 May, 11 June, 15 September, 29 November, 11 December, 1983; 5 March, 19, 29 August, 27 October, 1984; 17, 21 August, 26 September, 1, 16 November, 1985; 19, 21 June, 1986. Samuel was also a successful cotton growing entrepreneur who began to grow the crop in the early 1950s. He owned two farms on which he grew cotton and also kept cattle. He concentrated on these businesses and that made

him more successful than his colleagues who multiplied their businesses to a point where they could not manage them effectively.

Lucy Nxumalo and Ida Nxumalo were relatives, Mafutseni, 11 August, 8 September, 1980. Lucy's husband, who was long dead at the time the research was conducted, had grown cotton in Mafutseni in the early 1940s in response to the cotton demand made on them by Messrs Kynocks and Company, J.L. Clark and Company and Cotona. Her son Ephraim Nxumalo had advised them later on how to grow cotton especially after his training in South Africa.

Ephraim Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 15, 20 July, 4, 11 August, 8, 11 September, 7 December, 1980. He devoted his time to the author's work by taking him to various people he knew to have been involved with cotton growing. Having been an agricultural officer in the area from 1945 to the mid 1970s when he retired, Nxumalo was aware of most of the problems which hindered cotton cultivation in those areas of Swaziland which he had visited as agricultural officer. His knowledge, which he suggested be checked against that of other people was helpful to identify the major themes upon which cotton cultivation hinged during World War Two and the subsequent years. He died tragically in 1981.

Mhlupheki Nxumalo, Mafutseni, 15, 19 July, 11, 21 August, 8 September, 1980; 13 February, 1983. He was not involved in cotton cultivation because the crop was labour intensive and yet according to him the money it offered then did not warrant the inconvenience and costs its production entailed. He was a heavy drinkard.

Philemon Nxumalo, Samson Nxumalo, and Abel Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 23 July and 20, 23 October, 29 November, 1980; 11, 16 September, 1984; 16 September, 1987. These were brothers. They all began to grow cotton in 1959 in the area. Initially they came from the temperate area of the territory specifically to grow cotton in 1959.

Simon Nxumalo, Matsanjeni, 23 October, 1980. He had a vague idea of the history of cotton cultivation in the area because he did not grow it himself on account of it being capital intensive.

Alpheus Ntshangase, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 1980. His settlement in the area dated back to the mid 1970s when cotton cultivation was more lucrative than before due to the risen price. He had originally come from Hluthi.

Elliot Ntshangase, Nsalitje, 29 November, 1985; 16 November, 1986; Mhlushwa Nkosi, Nsalitje, 16 November, 1986. Poverty hampered progress in cotton cultivation by these growers. Interest in the crop was however, very strong.

Mbhavumane Ntshangase, Matsanjeni, 16 July, 5 September, 1985. He joined cotton cultivation from the temperate Hluthi in the mid 1970s and has since made good progress in it.

Mnukwa Nyatsikati, Mtsambama, 7 September, 1982. He did not grow cotton but was helpful in answering many questions on cotton production in the area.

Johannes Nzuza, Matsanjeni, 23 July, 20 October, 1980. He was involved in cotton cultivation from the early 1950s. Johannes died in the early 1980s still growing cotton.

John Douglas Scot, Luve, 10 August 1980 and 11 March, 1982. Scot was one of the early European settlers who arrived in the country in the 1890s along with Wallis and others and settled in Manzini. He was not involved in cotton cultivation but noted most of the important developments which occurred and had some bearing on cotton. He knew for instance, the reasons for the failure of some early cotton growers to attract enough Swazi labour to their cotton plantations.

Elliot Shiba, Matsanjeni, 23 June, 19 August, 20, 28 October, 25, 29 November, 1980; 20, 31 July, 21 September, 1982; 12 February, 19 May, 15 September, 25 October, 1983; 12 May, 12, 29 August, 24, 27 October, 1984; 11 February, 9, 15 May, 17, 25 August, 1985; 19, 29 May, 16 July, 26 August, 1986; 21 August, 16 September, 16, 24, 28, 29, November, 1987. He was one of the rich cotton cultivating entrepreneurs. He owned two farms, two trading stores, a repair garage, a butchery, a grocery, a petrol filling station, motor spare parts shop and some restaurant. His business was however, nearly brought to the knees in 1985 by the many investments he had made and yet failed to manage effectively. He owned hundreds of cattle which he slaughtered to



sell at his butchery. He was a force to reckon with in these businesses.

Samuel Shongwe, Hlushwana, 16 May, 29 November, 1985; 11 February, 27 September, 16 November, 1986; 17 March, 29 July, 16 November, 1987; Mabhalane Shongwe, Hlushwana, 11 February, 1986; Majaha Sibisi, Sitilo, 20 July, 1984; Samson Shongwe, Sitilo, 28 July, 1982; Elizari Xaba, Sitilo, 31 July, 1982. While these growers were involved in cotton cultivation, they were also equally involved in the production of maize and vegetables for sale and consumption

Shadrack Sibanyoni and Petros Thwala, Mbabane, 25 July, 1980. Shadrack was in charge of Establishments and Training Department at the time of the field studies, but due to the fact that he had served in the 1960s as Director of Agriculture, he was approached for assistance and he suggested various places and people who could be of some help to the research. Thwala also played the same role because, though he was not familiar with most of the information sought, he suggested people who could assist.

Almon, Joseph, Simon Sihlongonyane, Mgamudze, 23 October, 1980, 19 May, 29 December, 1982; 10 August, 1983. They grew up in the area but their interest in cotton was not very strong due to the capital intensity of the crop. They also complained about the poverty of the soil on which they cultivated the commodity. They needed to boost its fertility with chemical fertilizers every planting season.

Ndawonye Sikhondze, Lulakeni, 19 December, 1982; 12 August, 1983; 9 May, 12 August, 1986; 29 July, 1987; 2 January, 1988. He began to grow cotton along with other crops such as sweet potatoes in the early 1950s. Potatoes were grown mainly for trade though some of it was sometimes consumed domestically. As a polygamist, he worked hard to justify his social reasons to have more than one wife and he was very prosperous. He owned cattle which were invested in cotton cultivation and the promotion of farming in general.

Almon, Esaw, John, Samson, Simeome Sikhosana, Makhava, 20, 29 November, 1980; 19 December, 1982; 12 May, 1983; 16 November, 1986; 29 May, 1987; Aaron Jele, Makhava, 19

December, 1982. These were lukewarm cotton growers who were unaware of a number of crucial issues involved in cotton cultivation.

Ephraim Tsabedze, Tshedze, 20 July, 16 August, 1980; 8 March, 15 August, 1982; 16 June, 1986; 8 March, 1987. He was helpful both in relating the story of cotton cultivation and suggested names of the people he thought could be helpful.

Albert Vilakati, Matsanjeni, 23 June, 20 October, 16, 29 November, 1980; 8, 27 March, 1982; 11 March, 1983; 29 September, 1984; 8 March, 1985; 11 February, 26 November, 28 December, 1986; 29 November, 1987; 8 January, 1988. He was the resource person because he was the first Swazi to grow cotton in Matsanjeni early in the 1950s. He was a teacher by training but when he started to grow cotton he abandoned teaching because he thought that cotton growing was more lucrative than the other source of income.

John, Samson, Samuel, James, Joshua Vilakati, Makhava, 20 October, 1980; 31 July, 1982; 16 August, 1983; 30 September, 1984; 1 November, 1985; 9, 29 May, 16 November, 1986; 29 May, 1987. These brothers were interviewed on the question of cotton cultivation and the effectiveness of RDAS on cotton production since their farming took place in such an area. They produced cotton on some jointly maintained farm where they claimed their output to be in the region of 5 bales per acre per grower which was the standard output then on a well maintained field.

Samson, and Samuel Vilane, Matsanjeni, 20 October, 29 November, 1980; 20 July, 1982; 25 October, 1983; 11 February, 29 August, 1984. These two were brothers who came to the area specifically to grow cotton and rear cattle as a secondary engagement. Both of them owned a tractor each but they had not yet diversified their rural economy to run other businesses. The cause of that was mainly capital limitation.

Captain G.L. Wallace, Mbuluzana-Luve, 10 August, 1980. Wallis was among the first few European farmers who began to grow cotton in 1904. According to his testimony, in 1904 the first cotton experiments in Swaziland were undertaken by him, Miller and Frank Buckham. His occupation was agricultural and pastoral farming.

Sydney B. Williams, Manzini, 25, 30 July and 11 August 1980. Williams had served as Assistant Resident Commissioner for the Manzini (Bremersdorp) District in Swaziland in the 1930s at a time when the ECGC attempted an introduction of cotton into Swazi Areas. H. Hutchinson had mobilised him to convene a meeting with the King (then paramount chief) and chiefs on a national level to hammer into chiefs' heads the noble ideals of introducing cotton into Swazi Areas. He only died in December 1980.

David, Fendru Xaba, Sitilo, 20 July, 1982; 29 August, 1985; 29 November, 2 December, 1987. They were among the most prosperous growers who accumulated cattle from cotton cultivation. Though their homes were not very impressive to reflect that as cotton farmers they had acquired most of the key farming inputs like tractors with all the other equipment which facilitated farming with a tractor.

L. Zini, Extension Officer, Nhlangano Agricultural Offices, 30 July, 27 October, 1980. His story on Malangwane Dlamini was quite informative because he knew almost every detail of the circumstances which surrounded his attempt to grow cotton. He was the first informant to suggest that the writer would benefit from his investigation of the history of Samuel Fakudze and his cotton cultivation since even Malangwane had been inspired by Fakudze to grow cotton in his home area, Ngomane at that time. He has already retired his services from the Ministry of Agriculture.

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Box 1 File 1/3/2 Local livestock Improvement 1967-69.

Box 4 File 6/14 Swaziland Bull Breeders Association 1962-63.

Box 4 File 6/16 Swaziland Livestock Producers' Assoc. 1965-71.

Box 4 File 6/17<sup>1</sup> Swaziland Cotton Growers' Assoc. 1967-68.

Box 5 File 7/3 Dev. Plan Projects: Seed Production Unit 1969.

Box 5 File 7/11 Cattle Marketing 1970-71.

Box 6 File 7/12 Dev. Plan Project: No.11.8 Crop Production 1969.

Box 7 File 7/25 Agricultural Development Board 1970-71.

Box 7 File 37 Lowveld Cattle Breeding Station 1971-72.

Box 8 File 7/43<sup>2</sup> Dev. Plan Project for 1973-75 1972-73.

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Box 15 File 18 Cotton - General 1959-63.

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 Box 15 File 18/1 Cotton - Marketing & Movement 1959-68.  
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 Box 68 File 89/1<sup>4</sup> Crop Marketing 1961-62.

Box 68 File 89/1 <sup>5</sup> Crop Marketing	1962.
Box 69 File 89/4 Central Market	1968.
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Box 78 File 110/3 Agricultural Methods	1962.
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Box 98 File 145/2 Advanced/Master Farmers - General	1962-72.
Box 98 File 145/2/1 Pupil/Advanced/Master Farmer	1966-72.
Box 99 File 145/2/2 Pupil/Advanced/Master Farmer	1964-72.
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Box 99 File 145/2/4 Pupil/Advanced/Master Farmer	1962-72.
Box 99 File 145/7 Farmers Handbook	1965-69.
Box 99 File 145/7/1 Farmers Handbook	1970.
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